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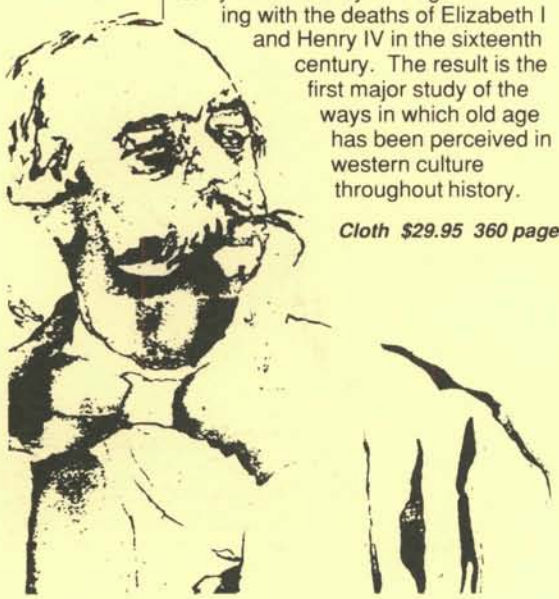

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Dancing in the Darts

ARISTIDES

"As long as you have your health," say the Jews, fairly frequently. For all I know, the Armenians, the Bessarabians, the Patagonians, and the Macedonians say it, too. If so, I wish to go on record here as saying that they are all bang-on-target correct. Over the past few months, I seem briefly to have lost mine—my health, that is—and it quite threw me. Not to be alarmed. I have suffered no heart attack, no cancer has been discovered lurking within me, no stroke has struck. Instead something much more trivial and undignified has hit. I have a disorder of the intestines; it is, technically, a disease. I prefer, out of personal pique, not to name it and therefore give it any publicity. In a book written for sufferers of this disease it is said that its cause, and therefore its cure, is unknown. It doesn't necessarily shorten one's life; it merely makes it more irritating—the hope is, if carefully watched, not too much more irritating.

I have come to refer to it, in Irish fashion, as "Me Troubles." For a while, these seemed quite serious. Me Troubles caused me to lose weight; grow anemic; fail to retain protein, vitamin B_{12}, also vitamin D; and for a while it was thought that it had done something to my liver that I do not quite recall, probably because I am of that portion of humanity whose members prefer not to know that they have a liver (or a gallbladder, kidneys, pancreas, and spleen, not to speak of the islet of Langerhans, which I'd rather think of as a charming ski resort near Stockholm). But enough of this organ recital. The main point is that for three or so months I felt well below par, under the weather, not myself, plain lousy.

Perhaps complicatedly lousy comes closer to describing my condition. Feeling plain lousy would not have been sufficient to drive me into the hands of a physician, for I am—or at least up to now have been—a nearly pure type of the inverse hypochondriac. By this I mean that, in a reversal of the hypochondriac, I believe I am never ill. If I bleed, I wait until the bleeding stops; if I swell, I wait until the swelling goes down; if a rash appears upon my skin, I wait until it disappears—and, lo, it always has: stopped, gone down, disappeared. I am fearful that, if I appear in a physician's office complaining of earache, he will put me through a battery of highly technical tests that will determine beyond all doubt that I must have two toes removed. I prefer to retain the earache and the two toes. Rather like a misogynist bachelor who enjoys hearing stories about marital failure that serve to confirm his own actions and views, I have enjoyed, perhaps unduly, jokes that deflate the authority of physicians: jokes about migraine headaches caused by too-tight underwear, about psychoanalysts who cannot be bothered to listen, about physicians being regularly astounded by the marvels of their patients' sex lives. I had begun to think myself a Jewish Scientist, on the model of Christian Science, so set had I become on avoiding all commerce with the sawbonely trades.

I had been able to do so fairly successfully owing to the good luck of being in possession of solid if not always ebullient health. Let the record speak boringly for itself. When I was four or five, I had my tonsils removed; at nine I chipped an elbow and wore a cast on my arm during a particularly hot Chicago summer; at thirty-seven, at the Los Angeles airport, I sprained an ankle and for a week walked with a cane; in my mid-forties I acquired a mildish case of mononucleosis. ("Mono?" asked a terse friend at the time. "At his age are they certain it isn't Meno?") Twice during the past two decades, at the request of my wife, I have had general physical examinations, with delightfully empty results. And, oh yes, once

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about eleven years ago, I discovered blood in my stool. I contemplated the possible meaning of this for some sixteen or eighteen weeks—wondering from time to time if I hadn't ought to get my rather unimpressive estate in order—then arranged an appointment with a gastroenterologist. A laconic man, he put me through an examination that steadied me in my already firm resolve to spend all my days as a heterosexual, had me knock back a cup of barium for purposes of X rays, and finally sent me packing with some red pills that stopped the bleeding. Most healthy—and therefore most happy—fella.

The only comfort I derive from Me Troubles is that it confirms my general views about health. These views, I realize, are arbitrary, unconventional, wholly unscientific, yet they are mine own and hence precious to me. I believe that health is a dart game in which darts descend from the sky, randomly hitting some persons and leaving others untouched. (If you, child of the Enlightenment, wish to call these darts "genes," be my guest.) Cause is not entirely disassociated from effect in this view, and if you smoke fifty or sixty Camels every day or have liberally lubricated your interior with a vast quantity of alcohol over several decades, you really oughtn't to look up in disbelief when told your lungs or liver are in bad shape. In health, I believe, vice is punished, though not evenhandedly, but virtue generally goes unrewarded. How else explain the too-frequent illness, crippling, or death of the young, the innocent, the good, and the magnificently in-shape. Viruses, genes, strange malfunctions, you say. Darts, say I, darts diabolically descending. Please recall that I speak with the authority of a man with a mild disease that has no known cause and no known cure.

Although the symptoms of Me Troubles are said to include fatigue, irritability, and depression, the last named, depression, is not a condition I have ever been able to sustain for very long—owing, I have generally assumed, to an insufficient attention span. But in this instance I did feel distinctly down, and what put me there was the recognition that I could no longer be as heedless, as hitherto I have always been, about my health. Perhaps the sweetest luxury that health confers is removing one from thinking about health at all; it lets you live, so to speak, outside your body. Now I suddenly found myself thinking about it all the time: about diet, about sleep, about keeping up with a regular regimen of pills. (I, who once aspired to be known by certain nightclub bartenders, am now beginning to be known by certain drugstore pharmacists.) Resiliency, the easy snapping back from exertion that the healthy can count upon, could no longer quite be counted upon by me, at least not in the same deliciously careless way. Not that I wished to do power lifting or compete in a triathlon in Alaska, but I do from time to time like to break into a rather pathetic Fred Astaire imitation. ("You see," Fred himself says in the movie *Top Hat*, "every once in a while I find myself dancing.") I still do my Fred Astaire, but not quite full out. One thinks a bit before cutting loose with a dart in one's foot.

So far nothing has surfaced in the medical literature that I have seen, but I wonder if Me Troubles do not also cause a decided weakness for steep and risky generalization. Since Me Troubles, I have decided that the world is divided into two kinds of people. Robert Benchley, may he rest in peace, once said that the world is divided into two kinds of people: those who divide the world into two kinds of people and those who don't. Benchley's division, I suspect, is uneven, for most of us do so divide the world at one time or another, and at this particular time I happen to see it divided into those who have and those who do not have their health. Sheer solipsism on my part, perhaps, but I see a plenitude of evidence for it all round me, much of it on the very block on which I live.

From the chair in which I now sit, I can see a portion of the awning of a health club on the street below. Into this club, from six in the morning until ten at night, mostly young men and women come and go, and I am fairly certain they do not talk of Michelangelo. In sweatpants and tank tops, in sweatshirts and spandex pants, they go at it, grunting and groaning, lifting weights, hoisting coiled machinery, dancing aerobically, running treadmills, putting themselves through various other tortures in the name of staying in shape. Calisthenics of a low- or high-tech kind has never been my idea of a good time, but the people who depart from this health club seem beyond doubt happy in their work. Do they ever, I wonder, as they emerge, let their eyes fall on the very next door to the south, which is a physical therapy clinic, treating people

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recovering from serious illnesses, accidents, injuries, breakdowns. As do all ironists, I have a taste for stark juxtaposition, but this—a health club placed next door to a sick club—is a bit heavy-handed, even for me.

Yet this neighborhood seems to be zoned Ironic. At the corner, a large apartment building and parking garage has been under construction for more than a year. "That," as Yeats said in a strikingly different context, "is no country for old men," and the young men working the construction jobs, through steamy summers and blasted winters, seem not merely healthy but at the stage beyond healthy. The normal rules of health seem not to apply to them. They smoke cigarettes without physical complication or social compunction, eat their fill of precisely the kind of food that appeals to them, appraise the passing young women with a jeweler's eye and a burglar's conscience. On a particularly cold day during a low ebb in my own health, I happened to be walking alongside one of these young men, who sported a modified version of a Nietzschean mustache—thick, auburn, and tinted with ice—and I thought to myself that there is perhaps more vitality in that mustache than I feel just now in my entire body. Sheer health envy, of course, which is a thing I had never felt before.

Near the other end of the block is a retirement hotel. Round the corner and a block to the east there are three other such institutions. A block to the west is an eight-story building filled with physicians' offices. Two blocks to the north, meanwhile, is a university with its large population of the young. Such a neighborhood makes for blatant contrasts. On one side of the street a blue-rinse-haired dowager, a touch tremulous with palsy, using a metal cane, trepidaciously takes the air, walking slowly, bringing one foot up to the other; while across the street a clean-limbed Chinese boy in silky blue shorts, a red baseball cap, and a grey University of Virginia sweatshirt seems not so much to be running as gliding by. Two male college students study, from behind, the walk of a splendidly aeroboticized young blond woman in a ponytail and a black velour Fila warm-up suit on her way to the health club, as she walks past the medical building. Before the building stands a gaunt man leaning on the contraption known as a walker, as his daughter, who herself looks to be in her sixties, pulls the car up to the curb before confronting the always tricky adventure of negotiating him into the back seat of the car. Yes, this neighborhood is quite nicely set up to make one think that the world is divided into two kinds of people.

Is the self-pity knob turned up too high here? I suspect that it is. (I cannot recall who said that self-pity was the only consistently believable human emotion. Whoever it was, the old boy was onto something.) Perhaps it is only that I have not yet quite grown used to finding myself on the unhealthy side of the great divide. The novelty of it may have me over-stimulated. I remind myself of Joachim Ziemssen, Hans Castorp's cousin in *The Magic Mountain*, the same Joachim Ziemssen who would have been "distinctly handsome if his ears had not stood out. Up to a certain period they had been his only trouble in life. Now, however, he had others." I find, moreover, that I tend to enjoy talking about my illness, even though until now I have been rather selective in whom I have told about it. I have not yet met anyone else who has it, but many people I know seem to know someone—a neighbor, a cousin—who does. I should be delighted to meet such a person—ah, *mon frère, mon semblable*—so that we could gas away unstintingly on what, at the moment, seems to me my favorite subject: my very own little disease. This, I realize, is what used to be called "sick."

What is sick about it was stated plainly enough by Seneca, who said that "no man can have a peaceful life who thinks too much about lengthening it." One has to respect that sentiment coming from a man who was forced to commit suicide for participating in an alleged conspiracy against his emperor and is said to have philosophized while in the act of opening his own veins. On the other hand, it strikes me as altogether natural to want to prolong an agreeable life, and to have, as a Henry James character in *The Europeans* puts it, "perhaps a selfish indisposition to bring our pleasure to a close." I am mightily grateful that my own disease, if carefully watched, is not supposed to shorten my life, for early death would make me feel like a buoyant child put to bed just when the party seemed really to get going. In longevity, as in so many other spheres of modern life, we now all live in a revolution of rising expectations. A full three score and ten, let us face it, does not, to most of us, any longer feel all that full. Those

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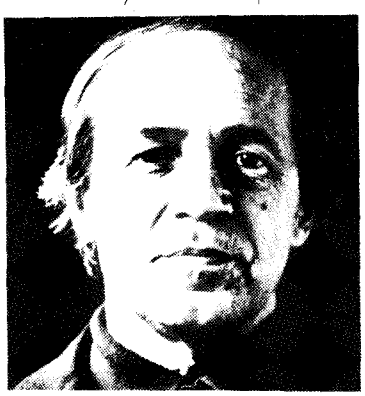

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of us greedy for life prefer not to peg out until at least eighty, and well beyond. Of most people who survive to die beyond the age of eighty and who have not otherwise had a painful life, I find myself often saying, upon learning of their death, that they have had a pretty good roll of the dice. But my guess is that most among them would have liked to stay at the table at least a little while longer.

I suppose the crucial question is what you are willing to pay to live as long as you can, assuming that a dart does not get you young. A great many Americans just now seem to me to have organized their lives around the idea—the hope, more precisely—of making it to, say, ninety-seven, with good digestion, remaining sexually active, staying fairly nice looking. They will achieve this through a combined program of exercise (a thing hated, as the Reverend Sydney Smith once remarked, by every person of sense and talent), diet, and sensible moderation. Ah, the hopeful ones, dreamers of the impossible dream. I note vast numbers of them, many middle-aged and far from athletic in bearing, jogging along the lakefront near where I live. Faces contorted in grimaces, limbs often bandaged or splinted, flesh flushed, they pound on—no gain, as the platitude has it, without pain—in anticipation of longer life, lots of it, right here on this earth.

Others hope to achieve a nearly endless life through diet. I see some of the most fanatical among them when, in need of some item forgotten at the supermarket, I repair to a nearby health-food market. Everything in the joint, I need scarcely say, is organically grown. They sell chickens, I once heard it reported, whose feet have never been allowed to touch the ground—the only time in my life I can recall feeling a stab of pity for a chicken. Half an aisle in this market is given over to pills and various compounds. Granola abounds, sprouts proliferate, the fiber in the place is so high you can practically incur a nosebleed. It is not, in short, a good spot for picking up a five-pound assortment of Whitman's Samplers or a full slab of ribs for the barbee, as the Australians call it.

Yet for all the concern about achieving health through food, the health-food set in this shop, customers and employees both, look to me to be in very bad shape. So many of the women seem to have furry faces and sunken cheeks; the young men, wispy beards and reedy arms. All have a solemn air about them. They are people who treat their bodies as temples, but, like the old joke about the radical Reform Jewish temple, these bodies seem closed for the holidays. Not that I would consider telling a joke in this market, whose denizens sometimes seem to me from another planet. George Orwell, in *The Road to Wigan Pier*, wrote that "the food-crank is by definition a person willing to cut himself off from human society in hopes of adding five years to the life of his carcass; that is, a person out of touch with common humanity."

"And this man Orwell," I can hear one of the pale stock-boys at the health-food market ask through his sprout-like beard, "how long exactly did he live?"

"Hmmm," I clear my throat before answering. "Died at the age of forty-six, actually."

The explanation would probably not go down well in these quarters, but in fact George Orwell caught a dart, the one called tuberculosis. That particular dart hit a large number of twentieth-century writers; Franz Kafka, D. H. Lawrence, Simone Weil, Albert Camus, Anton Chekhov, Katherine Mansfield, and André Gide, among others, were consumptives. Such names are almost sufficient to grant tuberculosis the status of the literary disease par excellence. Earlier, writers and artists tended to contract illnesses lower down in the anatomy. Montaigne suffered sorely from kidney stones, one of which eventually killed him. (Piranesi, too, died of a kidney ailment, in his case one he neglected.) Edward Gibbon himself became history as a result of an infection caused by an operation on his hydrocele, or accumulation of fluid around the testicles. None of these sound like graceful ways to make one's final exit.

But then writers seem not ever to have been famously healthy. One Dr. Tissot, in a book titled *De la santé des gens de lettres* (1768) included in his list of illnesses that afflicted writers: diseases of the nervous system, tension, poor eyesight, palpitations, dizziness, defective digestion, lassitude, melancholia, gout, hair loss, tumors, aneurysms, insomnia, apoplexy, dropsy, flatulence, constipation, ulcers, impotence, and more. Not an unimpressive little list, taken all in all, especially for indoor work.

The tendency of writers to dramatize does not always make them the most reliable witnesses on the state of their own health. To hear some among them tell it, no work is so

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perilous as that of a career in art. Baudelaire's infamous remark about practicing any of the arts not being good for one's sex life—"*Plus un homme cultive les arts, moins il bande*"—is but one giddy example. Then, too, not a few writers have been hypochondriacs. Working alone, living in their minds, exercising their imaginations much more than their bodies, writers find plenty of time to invent diseases, illnesses, maladies both subtle and flamboyant. (Bachelors, in my experience, are also talented at hypochondria; it is a condition that requires a certain amount of free time.) T. S. Eliot's letter to his cousin Eleanor Hinkley nicely hits the cheery note of writers on their own health: "My teeth are falling to pieces, I have to wear spectacles to read, and from time to time I am contorted with rheumatism—otherwise I am pretty well." The Old Possum was all of thirty-five when he wrote that.

H. L. Mencken, who publicly posed as a genial rowdy mildly boastful of his boozing as a younger man, and who was philosophical about the fragility of Homo sapiens as an older man, Mencken the robust, Mencken the skeptical, this same Mencken turns out in his private life to have been a quite vigorous hypochondriac. His *Diary* is filled with reports on his ailments, which are not only various but numerous. Mencken had the distinct disadvantage, which all serious hypochondriacs seem to acquire, of possessing a vast store of medical information. A number of physicians at Johns Hopkins School of Medicine were among his friends, and doubtless he pumped them for all the latest medical scuttlebutt they had. Mencken watched himself with the most sedulous care, on the qui vive for some new symptom, some minor malfunction, some fresh shred of evidence that the entire human machine was about to collapse. He even thought that he might one day "add an appendix to my magazine chronicle [a book he never got around to writing] giving my medical history," a thing no other writer had done, "though all books by literati are full of complaints of illness." In a nice twist, Mencken attributed his own relative longevity to his bad health:

> When I was 40 I had no expectation of reaching 65, and in fact assumed as a matter of course that I'd be dead by then. My father died at 44 and my grandfather Mencken at 63. Perhaps I have lasted so long because my health has always been shaky; my constant aches and malaises have forced me to give some heed to my carcass. To be sure, I have worked too hard and maybe also drunk too much; but on the whole I have been careful.

Eventually, of course, all hypochondriacs prove correct; that is, they do, in the fullness of time, sicken and die, as H. L. Mencken did, at the age of seventy-five, seven years after a stroke that cruelly left him, most word-minded of men, unable either to read or to write.

To be a hypochondriac is to combine the compulsion toward perfection with the imagination for disaster. This combination, as will be quickly apparent, is not a guaranteed recipe for psychological ease. The hypochondriac wants everything about his health to be perfect—"I, for one, have never in my life come across a perfectly healthy human being," says Dr. Krokowski, second in command at the International Sanatorium Berghof in *The Magic Mountain*—and yet is endlessly finding flaws, danger signs, clear reasons for panic and terror. Hypochondriacs tend to be widely knowledgeable not only about illness and disease but about physicians, local and national. While they may not be found smiling there, they are often happiest in a doctor's office. They require lots of attention. Seven or eight hundred well-placed hypochondriacs could probably bring down socialized medicine, so great are their demands. Paradise for an earnest hypochondriac is not perfect health but a month at the Mayo Clinic, during which he is the sole patient and none of the staff is off on holiday. A true hypochondriac, say this much for him, is rarely without something to think about.

Evelyn Waugh was not a hypochondriac, but I have long been impressed by a story his friend Christopher Sykes, who was also one of his biographers, tells about visiting Waugh in a London hospital after his recovery from an operation for hemorrhoids. Sykes heard Waugh out on the pain the operation had caused him and on the suffering the subsequent treatment brought. In an attempt to cheer his friend up, Sykes suggested that at least he would now be relieved of much chronic pain, and in any case the operation must have been necessary.

> "No," [Waugh] said, "the operation was not necessary, but might conceivably have become so later on."

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"Not necessary? Then why did you have it done?"

"Perfectionism."

After reading that, Evelyn Waugh's hemorrhoids have become a symbol for me, in medical, dental, and other spheres, of the kind of job that doesn't need doing. "A clear instance," I say, "of Waugh's hemorrhoids."

Everyone needs all the symbols, talismans, uplifting stories, strings of garlic, and anything else he can use to ward off the hypochondria that now encroaches upon us all. So many elements in contemporary life conduce to make one more than a little nutty on the subject of health, and not least among them is the abundance currently loosed upon the world of what is known as "health news." Most television news programs in large cities now have someone called "a health reporter" or "our health editor." His or her job seems to be to recount stories of dramatic transplants ("Steelworker rejects liver of llama"), goofy diets ("Man loses fifty pounds in eleven days on smoked piranha"), and new causes, gastronomical and environmental, of cancer, heart attack, and stroke ("Marriage may cause stroke—tonight at eleven"). Who among us with a normal greed for longevity—or, if you prefer, an insufficient death wish—has not felt a bit jerked around by contradictory stories on cholesterol, fiber, caffeine, aspirin, and a great many other items? The morning it was announced that decaffeinated coffee, too, could adversely affect serum cholesterol levels, the man who reads the news on the classical music station I listen to sighed, then wistfully said: "Can't smoke, can't eat, now I can't drink coffee. Oh, well, there's still music."

What, I wondered the moment he said it, if classical music were found to cause cancer? I suppose the story would break, inevitably, in *The New England Journal of Medicine*, playing the next day on all the front pages and television news programs in the country. Soon thereafter researchers at the Erasmus University Medical School in Rotterdam determine that the most dangerous music of all to listen to is that provided by stringed instruments, especially violoncello and bass. (This finding will later be refuted by a study done at Pennsylvania State University; listening to a viola for twenty minutes, Penn State researchers find, is roughly equivalent to standing for the same length of time behind a bus without pollution controls whose motor is running.) The American Heart Association, meanwhile, announces that wind instruments—particularly the trumpet, French horn, trombone, and tuba—are bad for the hearts not only of those who play them but of those who listen to them. Music played by plucked instruments, according to a study at the Harvard Medical School, presents no health danger whatsoever. A well-organized program in the public schools teaches children about the dangers of chamber music; the First Lady gives her full support to a campaign among the young whose slogan is "Say No To Mozart."

What the infusion of a vast quantity of half-baked medical information appears to have done is to make everyone more jittery about his health. We now have an increased awareness of all that can go wrong with the human body without a commensurate awareness of what can be done to avoid some of the more horrendous of these possibilities. The great fitness craze, the careful eating mania, have not, I suspect, made people any less anxious about their health; quite the reverse. By objective measures, people are now more healthy than ever before, and the most convincing of these measures is that we live much longer: at the turn of the century, life expectancy for American men was 47.3 years; today it is 74.7, and 78.8 years for women. Death rates for the great killers of the day—cancer, heart attack, stroke—have all tended to go down. Why, then, aren't we happier?

Because, my guess is, greed for long life with unbroken good health cannot finally be satisfied. Those of us who wish to live as long as possible—in, I need scarcely add, fine physical and mental repair—are living a hopeless dream. If one succeeds in living long, avoiding the crueler darts through cautious living and great good luck, in the end one will likely only have lived long enough to be visited by one of the two terrors most of us fear above all: cancer or senility. Sorry to put a damper on the party, but we really are all in the condition of the man in the cartoon who has just fallen out of his twentieth-story office window and who, ten floors from the ground, calls out, "So far, so good."

Still, the view on the way down is not without its charms. Or, to switch and gently mix metaphors (stirring lightly), even more than halfway out to sea with a rent sail, I

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myself find the shore full of fascinating fauna. Physicians, for example, who until now I have managed to elude, have come to me as a fresh phenomenon. My doctors, for one thing, are younger than I. This is excellent from one standpoint, in that it means they are likely to outlive me and thus will be around to help me shuffle off to a place I hope will have a better climate than Buffalo. At the same time, I, who am used to thinking of physicians as fatherly figures of authority, find it a mite difficult to take a person much younger than I altogether seriously.

But then I have never taken doctors as seriously as did the generation of my parents, for whom they were as gods. I have some inkling of how ill-educated the contemporary physician tends to be, having gone to university with many of them. The reason for this, I realize, is that he had to concentrate all his mental energies on life's only important goal—getting into medical school—and this was a goal, for the aspiring physician, not compatible with even a narrow liberal education. Not, you understand, that I wish to discuss the *Meno* with a urologist, but I should just as soon that he didn't talk to me about "quality time" or "bonding." The physician treating me for Me Troubles, I am pleased to report, said at one point that, in my case, he hoped to be able to "avoid the barbarity of surgery," a phrase and sentiment that earned my appreciative attention.

I went to school with a young man whose family physician was William Carlos Williams. I am not sure why, but I do not think I would have wanted Williams for my physician; perhaps it is because he has written too many insignificant poems—sheer aesthetic snobbery on my part. I am not even sure that I would prefer to have had Chekhov as my physician. I rather doubt that so productive a writer, adding to world literature, would have had time to keep up with medical literature, which, in my selfishness, I should be eager that he do. Then, too, Chekhov saw too much in the way of true medical disasters, on Sakhalin Island and over the many years that he treated (often for nothing) the multitudes of Russian peasants, who came to him with their horrendous ailments and ghastly injuries, to be greatly sympathetic to my relatively minor affliction. No, a famous physician, especially one famous for extra-medical reasons, does not seem the answer.

What is wanted is a physician with great competence, considerable sympathy, and perhaps a touch of the philosopher. Lord Moran, Winston Churchill's personal doctor, was such a physician. He was always available and had a fine sense of his responsibilities, as the following passage from *Churchill*, the book drawn from his diary, makes clear:

> In a sense Winston is tough, yet he is hardly ever out of my hands. His eyes, his ears, his throat, his heart and lungs, his digestion and his diverticulitis have given him trouble at different times. Some little thing goes wrong and apprehension and impatience do the rest. And if his doctor cannot bring relief, well, he ought to.

Better still, Lord Moran shared, in a qualified sense, my own views of the arbitrariness of good health, especially beyond a certain age:

> When a man begins to grow old his future becomes guess-work. His faculties may be unimpaired, his health by all appearances sound, yet any day, without warning, a coronary thrombosis may strike him dead, or leave him an invalid, who remains a tenant of this world only by courtesy, well knowing that another arrow from the same quiver will get him in the end.

Arrows and darts, darts and arrows—it is, I tell you, a jungle out there.

I am up at four-thirty on a below-zero morning. I have had a bad night, failing to recapture sleep after a disturbing dream about surgery. I look out the window, and on the street below a fellow padded in heavy clothes is running down the middle of the road, risking frostbite to stay in shape, the damn fool. The physician treating me for Me Troubles had told me only the day before that he and I are likely to have a longtime relationship. I like him well enough, but the news, somehow, did not elate me. I do not have much talent for being a patient.

The word *patient*, which means "suffering or enduring without complaint," derives, of course, from the word *patience*, which, the etymologist C. T. Onions reports, means "endurance with calm." So far I have felt the suffering but not withheld the complaint; obviously, I shall endure, but don't ask me to be calm. Since learning of Me Troubles, I seem to have volleyed back and forth emotionally between rage and depression. Sitting in a hospital corridor, awaiting X rays of my en-

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trails, in one of those silly green gowns, wearing underneath only shorts and shoes and black socks, I feel vaguely put-upon, humiliated, and depressed. Death didn't seem so bad at the time, I recall thinking, though no one had actually mentioned my dying.

I have heard it said that people who are generally gloomy, who go about expecting the worst, take life's setbacks better than those with rosier views. Apparently, I have been one of those people with rosier views; evidently life, which has been very easy on me, has made me so. Beneath the reader of Kierkegaard, Dostoyevsky, and Nietzsche, a Rotarian has all along been living, for I had optimistically assumed that life would continue to issue me a free pass. I recognized that Me Troubles, as troubles go, were minor. I was not in danger of dying; I did not lose the function of any part of my body or facet of my mind; I was not disfigured; I was in fact not even suffering now that I had been put on a drug regimen. (Send no get-well cards.) Why, then, the rage? Why the depression?

Intimations of bloomin' mortality is why. I owe to this little disease of mine the first real intimation that there are some losses in life that cannot be recouped, that health is not endlessly regainable, that one is not going to live forever. Before now I knew all this without quite believing it. Now I believe it. "Every day you get older," says Butch Cassidy, "and that's a law." Although Butch was too polite to say it, eventually you run out of days, and then not even your "personal exercise physiologist," or your "total fitness plan," or your "non-punitive eating program" can come to your aid. I have never had a personal physiologist, plan, or program, but I did have a belief in my own invincibility. I now feel rather more vincible, if still far from defeated. Hitherto, I have been dancing in the dark; henceforth, as I am keenly aware, I shall be dancing in the darts, as we all are. But the great thing—all right, Maestro, hit it!—is to keep on dancing.

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The Ph.D. Squid

THEODORE ZIOLKOWSKI

ACCORDING TO THE *Summary Report 1987: Doctorate Recipients from United States Universities*, published by the National Research Council (1989), 32,278 new Ph.D.'s were awarded in 1987. Forty-four percent of those doctorates were in fields of science and engineering: 18 percent in the life sciences, 15 percent in the physical sciences, and 11 percent in engineering. Other large groups came from education (20 percent) and the social sciences (18 percent). The humanities and professional fields (business administration, social work, theology, and others) accounted for 11 percent and 7 percent respectively. While this distribution by fields held no surprises, a special section on time-to-degree highlighted some disturbing trends. First, the median time spent in completing a Ph.D. has been rising steadily for twenty years to its present 10.4 years (including 6.9 years of registered study). But the time required to proceed from a baccalaureate to a doctorate also varies significantly from field to field: it takes appreciably longer to get a Ph.D. in the social sciences (7.2 years of registered time) and the humanities (8.4 years) than in the sciences and engineering, all of which fall well below the average: engineering (5.8 years), physical sciences (6.0 years), and life sciences (6.5 years).

What do these figures mean, and why should we care? We should care, warn leaders in education, industry, and government, because the projected need for highly trained specialists in most of the specified fields cannot be satisfied in the 1990s by the current numbers of Ph.D.'s, which have been fairly stable for the past fifteen years. To meet increasing national and world requirements, we must attract more students into our graduate schools, and we must get them through more efficiently. What the figures mean, however, is another matter altogether, one that can be explained more satisfactorily by history than by statistical analysis.

At the beginning of this century many people in the United States

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were worried that there would be too many Ph.D.'s, not too few. In 1903 William James published an article deploring "the increasing hold of the Ph.D. Octopus upon American life." James's powerful metaphor of the Octopus has long dominated discussions of the Ph.D. in the United States, arousing archetypal images of a dark brooding presence strangling our students, our campuses, and indeed the intellectual life of the nation in its tentacles. (The image may have occurred to James because in 1899, much of which he spent in England, an unusual plague of octopi off the southern coast of England attracted a good deal of public attention.) Forty years later, in a reprise of James's piece (in *Teacher in America,* 1945), Jacques Barzun observed that "James was inspired when he spoke of an octopus: that describes its flabbiness, its ubiquity, and the squirting of ink which is its main reflex." According to Barzun, nothing had changed since the turn of the century. "The octopus has the young teacher in its grip and does not let him go." A "Ph.D. mania" has taken over the country; yet, Barzun claims, "After seeing degree holders and reading their theses, it is hard to say what the title shows." In a thorough and judicious study, *Graduate Education in the United States* (1960), Bernard Berelson stated that James "was concerned lest 'The Ph.D. Octopus' crush the true spirit of learning in the universities" and quoted James's essay at length because his "observations and comments reveal so well the timelessness of some issues of graduate study." To this day "the Ph.D. Octopus" is still invoked formulaically in discussions of graduate education and national life.

James, however, had in mind no such broad target as "Ph.D. mania" or "the true spirit of learning." He composed his essay with a very specific aim—to call attention to misuse of the Ph.D. by what he labeled "the Doctor-Monopoly in teaching." Writing toward the end of the period when educational leaders like Daniel Coit Gilman at Johns Hopkins, G. Stanley Hall at Clark, and Charles W. Eliot at Harvard were striving to create the first major research universities in the United States, he felt that the degree was in danger of being reduced to "a mere advertising resource," especially by the presidents and trustees of smaller institutions seeking to compensate for the lack of distinction in their faculties. Its most immediate effect was to keep many qualified but un-doctored teachers out of our colleges. "Will anyone pretend for a moment," James asked, "that the doctor's degree is a guarantee that its possessor will be successful as a teacher?"

James was voicing a concern that troubled a good many educators around the turn of the century. Five years later James's Harvard colleague, Irving Babbitt, in *Literature and the American College* (1908), bemoaned "the fetish worship of the doctor's degree on the part of certain college presidents." Babbitt believed that "this acceptance of

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the doctor's degree as proof of fitness for a chair of literature . . . is doing more than any one thing to dehumanize literary study and fix on our colleges a philological despotism." At Princeton, the dean of the graduate school himself, Andrew Fleming West, expressed his regret that the Ph.D. was becoming "an employment badge like a 'union card' " (in *The Graduate College of Princeton*, 1913).

The controversy about the value of a Ph.D. for a career in college teaching is therefore a classic one, extending from James by way of Babbitt and West to Barzun and beyond—down to today's disgruntled teaching assistant who looks around to see that he or she is doing most of the work of instruction at many universities while the highly paid professors who already have Ph.D.'s are teaching only rarefied graduate seminars, if teaching at all. (To suggest the extent of the concern today, a two-day walkout of teaching assistants on the Berkeley campus of the University of California in the spring of 1989 caused the cancellation of nearly 75 percent of classes.)

For all James's concern about the relevance of a Ph.D. to college teaching, he—an M.D. and scientist who had trained graduate students in physiology, psychology, and philosophy at Harvard, among them G. Stanley Hall and W. E. B. Du Bois—did not question the value of the Ph.D. as a degree certifying ability in research. "Our higher degrees were instituted for the laudable purpose of stimulating scholarship, especially in the form of 'original research.' " While he recognized the dangers of institutionalization on a large scale—"to develop a tyrannical Machine with unforeseen powers of exclusion and corruption"—he supported both the Ph.D. as a degree and the graduate school as an institution: "It is well for a country to have research in abundance, and our graduate schools do but apply a normal psychological spur."

But other factors are involved here. When James wrote his essay, he was a tenured professor on the point of retirement following a distinguished career. He did not feel personally threatened by the research scholars with their Ph.D.'s nor, as a scientist who had studied extensively abroad, ill at ease with German scientific methods. It is no accident that many of the presidents who stimulated graduate education in this country were themselves scientists who had also studied in Germany: the physical geographer Gilman, the chemist Eliot, and the psychologist Hall. From the very start, the Ph.D. was largely a degree for scientists, intended, as the Yale faculty put it in 1860, "to enable us to retain in this country many young men, and especially students of science, who now resort to German universities for advantages of study no greater than we are able to afford." The proportions of degrees awarded over the years show that this tactic was successful. By 1920, the physical and biological sciences accounted for more than half of the

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Ph.D.'s awarded in the United States. The social sciences made haste to emulate the sciences through the quantification of their methods, as did the humanities through a turn from appreciation to methodological and historical rigor.

The scientists were generally content with the new degree, whose requirements celebrated positivistic training and research. The principal opponents of the Ph.D. were humanists, whose work did not lend itself so smoothly to scientific methods. Babbitt, still an untenured assistant professor with a master's degree when he published *Literature and the American College,* felt distinctly menaced by the Ph.D.'s with whom President Eliot was staffing Harvard's departments. Not content with James's pragmatic argument against "the Doctor-Monopoly in teaching," Babbitt attacked the degree itself on the moral grounds that "the work that leads to a doctor's degree is a constant temptation to sacrifice one's growth as a man to one's growth as a specialist." The classicist Andrew Fleming West, less defensive than Babbitt although he also had no doctorate, sought to combat what he regarded as the "unenlightened specialization" of the new breed by creating at Princeton his Graduate College, a residence for a community of graduate students who, living together, would be infected by "the contagion of knowledge."

Babbitt—unlike James, who valued his scholarly contacts with Germany—was also afflicted by a rabid anti-Germanism, which led him to regard the Ph.D. as a "German incubus," to rail against "German doctors," and to claim that "the uncritical adoption of German methods is one of the chief obstacles to a humanistic revival." Babbitt almost certainly did not realize that he was recapitulating a debate whose terms had been exhaustively explored by German thinkers ever since Schiller, in his inaugural address at the University of Jena in 1789, made the classic distinction between *Brotgelehrte,* the specialists who want to learn nothing that would distract them from the fields in which they intend to earn their living, and the "philosophical minds," who see knowledge as a whole and integrate their particular interests into that unity. Babbitt went well beyond James in challenging the worth of the Ph.D. altogether, and he has been followed by others who, often unwittingly but nonetheless wrongly, attribute that humanist disdain of the degree itself to James.

In the realpolitik of an age where the Ph.D. is awarded in fields like business administration, agriculture, home economics, physical education, and recreation, it is naive to believe that what James called "our three magic letters" certify anything resembling the humanist notion of "culture." Today American universities, including the best ones, award the Ph.D. to foreign students who can barely speak English, to U.S. students who cannot understand a foreign language, to humanists who

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have no grasp of mathematical or statistical or scientific reasoning, and to scientists and engineers who can barely construct a coherent paragraph of English prose. Graduate schools cannot aspire to compensate for the educational and cultural deficiencies that students have brought along from secondary schools and undergraduate colleges. The Ph.D. does not pretend to certify a command of the calculus or Latin or U.S. history or French literature that a student should have obtained earlier in life. The role of the university as a cultural agent in our society has declined proportionately as the university has become less unified in its vision and its constituency and more of what Clark Kerr described as a multiversity, catering to students from the most varied backgrounds and career interests. In such an educational system, the Ph.D. can be no more—but should also be no less—than one well-defined step in the process leading from college through graduate school and into postdoctoral careers, whether within the university or outside.

What the Ph.D. does certify, and usually quite creditably, is a degree of competence regarding the organization and methods of a general field of study (for example, history or physics) and a solid command of the chosen field of specialization (for example, German history of the sixteenth century or string theory). It is a matter of expectations: you do not expect the holder of a new driver's license for passenger cars to be able to handle an ox cart or an eighteen-wheeler. But you would reasonably expect him to understand the historical link between the ox cart and the automobile as well as the theoretical analogy between steering the passenger vehicle and the truck. However, expertise in these road vehicles does not imply a similar skill with boats or aircraft. Whether the recipient of a Ph.D. is a brilliant generalist or a tedious nerd is essentially irrelevant to the abilities certified by the graduate program with its degree.

The same applies to the pedagogical qualifications of the doctorate. The newly certified Ph.D., like his graduate school professor, may be dazzling in the classroom or an unhappy tribulation for his students. (Today, many graduate students, especially in the humanities and social sciences, have too much, not too little, teaching experience by the time they receive their degrees—unvaried, unsupervised, and poorly remunerated experience.) But those abilities are not guaranteed by the degree. None of these characteristics stand in any necessary relationship to the other. The prodigiously learned generalist may be a prodigious bore, while the specialist with no interests beyond the narrow bounds of his field may, through his very obsession, captivate his students. In sum, the terms of the debate as established by James and Babbitt have become largely irrelevant to current discussions regarding the Ph.D. This does not mean that those concerns are unimportant—just that they

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are misplaced if addressed to the Ph.D. per se. As desirable as a well-rounded knowledge of one's field of specialization may be, and as important as it is to have excellent teachers in college classrooms, those problems cannot be solved by the Ph.D. alone, which exists—as James well knew—for related but distinctly different purposes. Discussion about reforms of the degree should take care not to discard what is good and distinctive about the Ph.D. by seeking to make it serve too many purposes.

For better or worse, the Ph.D. has increasingly been regarded as desirable by American society—even in fields where such certification might be thought irrelevant, such as music composition. (I note one amusing exception: I was recently petitioned—unavailingly—by a graduate student in physics to change the title of his Princeton degree from Doctor of Philosophy to Doctor of Science on the grounds that, in the Soviet Union where he was born, "the very word 'philosophy' came to mean the universally despised Marxist trash forcibly hammered into every head.")

In 1903, James wrote that "graduate schools still are something of a novelty, and higher diplomas something of a rarity." In fact only 337 Ph.D.'s were awarded in the United States that year, and (according to the National Academy of Sciences' 1978 survey *A Century of Doctorates)* barely 4,500 altogether had been bestowed since 1875. But the situation changed rapidly. The number of Ph.D.'s has roughly doubled each decade in this century—at a rate considerably more rapid than the population as a whole—bringing the annual total today to the low thirty thousands, where it has stabilized since the early 1970s. It has been estimated that, by 1984, half of one percent of the U.S. population held a doctorate.

The Ph.D. has not just multiplied, it has also spread. Almost 90 percent of the doctorates awarded in 1903 were concentrated in the fourteen founding members of the Association of American Universities, mainly though not entirely on the East Coast. The 33,456 Ph.D.'s in 1987–88 were granted by some 350 institutions. The dispersal of universities now awarding the degree is indicated by the fact that today even the top forty doctorate-granting institutions (beginning with the flagship campuses of the state universities of California, Wisconsin, Illinois, Texas, and Michigan) accounted for not quite half of them. The Ph.D. Octopus is well and thriving. Indeed, for the contemporary situation the generally small, timid octopus, which tends to confine itself mainly to coastal waters, provides an image less compelling than another cephalopod: the large, aggressive, and highly mobile squid with two prehensile arms in addition to its eight grasping tentacles.

Today most colleges and universities still decorate their catalogues

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with titles, which, in James's words, "bespangle the page as if they were sprinkled over it from a pepper caster," and it is not likely that their titular ambitions will wane. It would confirm James's worst fears to know that the widely consulted *Peterson's Guide to Four-Year Colleges* routinely cites the percentage of Ph.D.'s on the faculty of each institution listed. Despite the huge increase in Ph.D.'s, the demand still outstrips the supply. The calamari, to give the squid its gastronomic designation, is regarded as a delicacy—and not just in those exotic parts of the world that send their students in increasing numbers to pursue their graduate studies in our universities, but also in the gourmet restaurants favored by the expense-account representatives of the non-academic world that is bidding for larger and larger shares of the Ph.D. market.

When James and Babbitt were writing, they had in mind principally the effect that the influx of Ph.D.'s would have on the American college as they knew it. But the Ph.D. is no longer primarily a teaching degree—especially in the sciences and engineering. Only half of today's Ph.D.'s are accepting academic employment, as compared to almost 60 percent just ten years ago. In 1987, according to the *Summary Report,* 19 percent of new Ph.D.'s went directly into industry, 11 percent into government, and more than 20 percent into other sectors (for example, elementary and secondary schools, nonprofit foundations, self-employment). The taste for squid is spreading, to the extent that some of the rarer academic varieties are virtually being pursued with drift nets. As surveys by the American Council for Education have recently shown, colleges and universities are already experiencing increasing difficulties in their efforts to identify and recruit faculty members, especially in business, computer science, mathematics, economics, the natural sciences, and the health professions. A major report by William G. Bowen and Julie Ann Sosa, *Prospects for Faculty in the Arts & Sciences* (1989), projects an increasing discrepancy between the supply and the demand in many other disciplines in the coming decades.

This shortage results from several factors. First, despite what Bowen and Sosa identify as the striking "flight from the arts and sciences" during the seventies—from 40 percent of total degrees conferred in 1970–71 to only one-quarter in 1984–85—undergraduate enrollments in those fields have recently leveled off and are expected to increase slightly in the 1990s (in response to the slackening interest in engineering among undergraduates, the increasing emphasis on the liberal arts not only in liberal arts colleges but also at such technological institutions as MIT, and the public concern with questions of ethics and values). Second, Bowen and Sosa point out that the anticipated steady supply in the number of new Ph.D.'s will not suffice to replenish faculty ranks, although they demonstrate (contrary to popular opinion) that there will

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be no dramatic "bunching" of faculty retirements in the nineties and that the retirements will have varying effects in different fields and types of institution. (In fact, some universities are already beginning to "stockpile" Ph.D.'s against that anticipated imbalance of supply and demand.) Third, the proportion of U.S. citizens receiving American Ph.D.'s has been declining—from more than 82 percent in 1977 to only 70 percent in 1987. While many foreign students plan to remain in this country following their studies, the U.S. will face increasingly strong competition for our Ph.D.'s from abroad as other countries intensify their investments in science and technology. Finally, the steady growth of big science—in federal and industrial laboratories as well as in universities—will absorb more and more highly trained researchers in such fields as superconductivity, space exploration, and medical research. Even though James's gentle octopus has metamorphosed itself into the largest invertebrate known to man, the supply is still not adequate to meet the increasingly ravenous demand from institutions and nations competing among themselves for Ph.D.'s. In the light of this problem, the debate over specialization versus generalization, or teaching versus research, seems rather quaint.

How has this situation developed? Since 1960 the number of Ph.D.'s awarded annually in the United States has more than tripled, from 9,733 to a total last year of 33,456. That figure might suggest that students are entering graduate school in adequate numbers to meet the demand. But most of the growth had taken place by 1973, when the system peaked. The growth then stopped because, for a variety of reasons, the demand for Ph.D.'s both within and without the universities declined. Universities, which had filled their ranks with new and young professors in the 1960s in response to the matriculation of the baby-boom generation, realized that they had enough, and in some fields too many, teachers for the smaller birth cohorts reaching college age in the late seventies and eighties. In some fields—specifically, the oil and aerospace industries—economic factors caused a decline in the demand for certain kinds of engineers and scientists. At the same time, starting salaries in other fields began to reach such heights that college graduates accepted jobs immediately after school or entered more immediately gratifying two-year M.B.A. programs with a quicker payoff. For these reasons, and despite certain social achievements—for example, the proportion of women increased to its current 35 percent of American graduate students—the proportion of U.S. men declined steadily. To keep the number of graduate students at the minimal level required to satisfy university teaching and research needs—especially in research-intensive fields of science and engineering—universities began recruiting widely abroad. As a result, in 1987 only 42 percent of the Ph.D.'s in

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engineering were awarded to U.S. citizens and only 61 percent in the physical sciences.

The current national graduate population of about 1.5 million students might still seem to be an adequate pool in which to cultivate squid. But most of those students are in professional or terminal master's programs. Far from all students who enter a doctoral program actually persevere to earn the degree. As many as 70 percent of students who pass their general examinations fail, for one reason or another, to complete the degree. Attrition is notoriously difficult to measure because both the definition and the data are so vague. Did the student drop out or did he or she switch fields or institutions? Did the student drop out for good or only long enough to earn some money or to have a child or to travel for purposes related to education? Universities have reliable statistics on students who received their Ph.D.'s because they are required to fill out a national survey form. But those who never finish rarely pause to explain why they dropped out.

Even if substantial numbers of these graduate students intended to stop with a master's degree or have made a happy transition into another subject or into a professional school, there are still enough disenchanted A.B.D.'s ("All But Dissertation") out there—concentrated in places like Cambridge, Morningside Heights, Hyde Park, Berkeley, and other large academic communities but visible everywhere—to have created a limbo of aging graduate students, an unhappy intellectual proletariat with its own mystique. From time to time one sees on resumés the designation "A.B.D.," as though it represented a degree actually received. The phenomenon of the A.B.D. is by no means peculiar to the late twentieth century. Two hundred years ago Johann Wolfgang Goethe provided a precise model of the type. As a law student at the University of Strasbourg in 1770–71, Goethe, as undisciplined as he was brilliant, wasted his first year in "extracurricular activities" and then, as the deadline approached, hastily patched together a dissertation, which was straightway rejected by his professors. On the basis of an oral examination he received a license to practice law—but no doctorate. Of course, a Ph.D. is not necessary for success in life, as William James well knew; Goethe went on to do quite nicely for himself, acting among other capacities as minister for higher education in the duchy of Saxe-Weimar. Moreover, his revenge on the institution was sublime: shortly after the rejection, he wrote the sections of *Faust* in which the university and its practices are wickedly satirized by Mephistopheles posing as a professor.

By 1903, what James called "this new class of American social failures" had begun to emerge in this country. His most poignant words are reserved for these persons whom he regarded as "the institution's victims."

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Men without marked originality or native force, but fond of truth and especially of books and study, ambitious of reward and recognition, poor often, and needing a degree to get a teaching position, weak in the eyes of their examiners,—among these we find the veritable *chair à canon* of the wars of learning, the unfit in the academic struggle for existence.

Forty years later Barzun classified the species: "Instructors aged forty-five and fifty are found treading the mill at the point where they began. . . . They find other posts, good, bad, or indifferent, but never forget the cruel Alma Mater that took their best years and made them start anew in mid-career." Circumstances have hardly improved. A few years ago a greeting card was circulating in university circles that featured a miserable creature with a hangdog expression under the inscription: "Meet the Bitterest Person in the World: The Grad School Dropout." From time to time the *New York Times* and the *Chronicle of Higher Education* print letters or op-ed pieces in which disgruntled A.B.D.'s savage the institutions with which they have been unproductively associated for all too many years.

Ultimately, both the recruitment of talented new graduate students and attrition among current graduate students are tied to an ominous third factor: time-to-degree. The squid is not just larger than the octopus: it also has two arms that can reach out farther than the eight tentacles—the better to hold on longer to the student once seized in its embrace. If any generalization about time-to-degree is possible, it is that it tends to increase. The *Summary Report 1987* calculated that time to the Ph.D. has increased by about 30 percent over the last twenty years. While time-to-degree varies appreciably from field to field and while it can be measured in different ways—either the total lapsed time between the baccalaureate and the doctorate (what the statisticians call TTD) or just the actual period of registered graduate study (RTD)—the time spent in completing the Ph.D. has been rising steadily, from 5.4 years in 1967 to 6.9 registered years in 1987 or from 8.1 years in total time to 10.4 years. Put another way, the average graduate student is currently well over thirty (actually 33.6 years old) and has spent close to twelve years in college and graduate school by the time he or she finally receives the degree that entitles him or her to begin any career that specifies the Ph.D. as its prerequisite. They are just entering the labor market at a point when many of their contemporaries in other professions are beginning to calculate their retirement benefits.

This has not always been the case. William James may have turned his elegant irony on the Ph.D. as a prerequisite for college teaching, but he did not question the time required to achieve it. In the example James cites at the beginning of his essay—of the brilliant student of philosophy who had been working as a writer for three years and suddenly found

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that he needed a Ph.D. to take a position in English literature offered at a smaller institution—the young man spent several weeks writing a thesis on metaphysics and reviewing his studies "so as to pass our formidable ordeals." The committee could not accept the hastily assembled work: "brilliancy and originality by themselves won't save a thesis for the doctorate; it must also exhibit a heavy technical apparatus of learning." But, unlike Goethe, James's protégé was urged to "pad out" the thesis properly and to resubmit it, and within a year he was able to fulfill all the requirements for the degree. While the overall time-to-degree was fairly lengthy (since the years of free-lance writing would have been counted), the period of registered graduate study was quite short—or, in any case, not significantly extended by the year needed to "pad out" an acceptable dissertation.

James's example is representative for that period. When Yale decided in 1860 to offer the doctorate, the requirements were simple: at least two years of study on campus past the bachelor's degree, a satisfactory final examination, and a thesis giving evidence of high attainment. The first three American Ph.D.'s were in due course awarded at Yale in 1861 after just two years of post-baccalaureate study. In the decades following the founding of the first American "research university" at Johns Hopkins in 1876 and despite the increasing proliferation of "the Ph.D. Octopus," the doctorate remained a short-term degree, normally requiring only two or, at most, three years of post-graduate study. These expectations were shared by the students. At the founding meeting of the Federation of Graduate Clubs in 1896, the representatives from various universities recommended that the minimum requirements for the Ph.D. should be two years of resident graduate study, a general examination, and a thesis. The establishment of national organizations beginning around 1900 led to efforts to standardize the degree. In 1908 the National Association of State Universities and in 1916 the Association of American Universities proposed that the period of post-graduate study should ideally be three years.

The American conception of the Ph.D. has remained remarkably constant throughout most of the century. In 1964 the Association of Graduate Schools and the Council of Graduate Schools issued a joint statement summarizing their view of the normal course of study leading to the doctorate: a year or two of lectures and seminars followed by a general examination and a dissertation. The entire course of study should normally involve no more than three or, at most, four years beyond the baccalaureate. The four-year norm has been affirmed by most writers who have analyzed the situation: for example, Bernard Berelson in *Graduate Education in the United States* (1960) and Stephen H. Spurr in *Academic Degree Structures: Innovative Approaches* (1970).

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While most graduate deans have striven quixotically to maintain the ideal of the four-year Ph.D., reality has veered sharply away. Indeed, Spurr calculated that only 12 percent of graduate students in 1970 were completing their Ph.D.'s within four years of the baccalaureate. The available evidence (in a 1963 NRC survey, *Doctorate Production in United States Universities, 1920–1962)* suggests that the average total time-to-degree for the 562 students receiving their Ph.D.'s in 1920 was 7.7 years and that by 1960 it had increased to 10.4 years. The data show certain variations. Already in 1920 the pattern was evident that prevails today: time-to-degree was shortest in the physical sciences and the life sciences, the fields in which more than half of the degrees were awarded; average in the social sciences; and appreciably longer in the humanities. All fields showed a deviation downward from the trajectory during World War II (probably as a result of accelerated wartime programs) and again during the early 1950s (probably as a result of several vast postwar fellowship programs). During the 1960s the total time-to-degree fell slightly because support possibilities were very good and the war in Vietnam made it attractive for students to maintain continuous enrollment. Yet during that same period—and probably for the same reasons—the registered time-to-degree increased steadily, from 5.2 years in 1958–60 to 5.4 years in 1967 and, without a break in the curve, to 6.9 years in 1987. (The spectrum is identical with that in 1920, ranging from the shortest degree time in the physical sciences to the lengthiest in the humanities.)

Various factors have been cited to account for the lengthening time-to-degree in our doctoral programs. In some fields—engineering or business and management, for example—the candidate is often expected to gain a certain amount of practical experience in "the real world" before entering, or completing, a graduate program; but the period of registered study is not seriously extended. Another factor cited for the statistical increase in time-to-degree is the rise in the number of part-time students in graduate schools. Is it the case that full-time students are finishing in the same time while the statistics are changed by the part-time students who take longer? (While I have no national data, at Princeton time-to-degree has been creeping gradually upward—from 5.4 years in 1986–87 to 5.6 years in 1987–88 and 5.9 years in 1988–89—even though the Graduate School admits only full-time students and strives mightily to maintain a reasonable time-to-degree.)

A third factor involves type of support. According to the *Summary Report 1987*, students with fellowships or research assistantships completed their degrees significantly faster than those who supported themselves with their own earnings or with family support or loans. (But the report has no way of taking into account the fact that students may

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receive fellowships because they are judged to be more capable—and therefore quicker to the degree—than those who receive no such award.) The amount of time spent teaching is another factor that varies from field to field. While teaching assistants finished in 6.6 years—that is, more slowly than those on fellowships and research assistantships but still well below the overall average—in those fields where teaching is most common, notably in the humanities, students who teach require 7.9 years to finish. (But the question still remains: do these students take longer to finish their work because they are teaching more, or are they teaching more because they need longer to finish their work?) Especially in the sciences, some professors also hold on to graduate students who have proved to be integral to a continuing research project. Finally, despite all the myths about the misery of A.B.D. status, some graduate students seem to enjoy the way of life—or at least prefer it to the uncertainties of the job market or the relegation to what they consider to be less desirable locations or institutions. The *ewiger Student* seems to have emigrated to this country from Germany along with the Ph.D. degree.

All of these considerations are less important than changes in disciplinary expectations. Something can be done, nationally and locally, about graduate student support, about part-time versus full-time study, about teaching demands, about exploitation of research assistants, and about other external factors. Disciplinary expectations, on the other hand, can be transformed only from within the individual departments. Changes here can have immediate results independent of such external factors as financial support or the job market.

Compared to the undergraduate curriculum, which is determined by the faculty as a whole and the institution's image of itself, graduate curricula are set almost exclusively by individual departments according to the expectations of the discipline (for example, the need for competence in Latin or in statistics, for archival research or the use of scientific equipment at distant locations). The graduate faculty as a whole may set certain minimal requirements: for example, at least one year of residence or a certain number of courses, a successfully passed general examination, and a thesis. But the substance of the degree is determined almost wholly by the department. Here matters have changed little since the days of William James, who noted among his colleagues "two antagonistic passions, one for multiplying as much as possible the annual output of doctors, the other for raising the standard of difficulty in passing, so that the Ph.D. of the special institution shall carry a higher blaze of distinction than it does elsewhere." These antagonistic passions manifest themselves today in pressures with which every graduate dean is familiar: to increase the number of graduate students in every

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department while, at the same time, extending the expectations (and the time) for the degree.

Higher expectations for degree candidates involve the material to be mastered in the early phase of graduate study, with the result that the date of the general examination has been pushed subtly back in some departments, especially in the humanities. But the very designation "A.B.D." suggests that the central problem is located mainly in the period following the examination, when the candidate is looking for a topic, doing research, and writing the thesis. Sometimes attenuation is justified. In some fields time-consuming fieldwork is a prerequisite for adequate professional training. The ecologist needs to be in Africa when the zebras are mating, the plant biologist in South America when the trees are fruiting, or the anthropologist in Sri Lanka long enough to win the confidence of the local population. In others, the student needs to spend months in archives or museums or foreign libraries collecting material. But if the student has been thoughtfully advised and steered to a topic that is not unrealistically large or exotic, then even that research away from campus should not require substantially more time than library and laboratory work on the home campus.

It is not without significance that time-to-degree almost precisely parallels the average length of dissertations by field. From 1920 to the present, total time-to-degree has consistently ranged from a low point in the physical sciences by way of engineering and the life sciences to the social sciences and professional fields, with its peak in the humanities. According to the survey upon which Bernard Berelson based his study, the length of dissertations accepted in 1957–58 (by median number of pages) extended from the physical sciences (105 pages) and life sciences (108 pages), by way of engineering (136 pages) and the professional fields (171 pages), to the social sciences (226 pages) and the humanities (285 pages). There are of course many local variations. The often mammoth dissertations in history and political science (more than 500 pages) are balanced by shorter ones in sociology and economics to produce an average in the social sciences that is slightly below the average in the humanities. Concerns about these problems have become so widespread that the Council of Graduate Schools in 1989 appointed a task force to study "The Role and Nature of the Doctoral Dissertation."

Bulk has not always been a prerequisite in humanities dissertations. When James Morris Whiton qualified for one of the first three Yale Ph.D.'s in 1861, he submitted a six-page handwritten thesis in Latin on the proverb *Brevis vita, ars longa*—a topic that might strike today's A.B.D.'s as sadly prophetic. The young philosopher that James cites wrote his dissertation in only a few weeks, although he needed another year to "pad it out" with scholarly apparatus. By 1968, Don Cameron

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Allen, in a study on the Ph.D. in English and American literature, estimated that 53 percent of the dissertations in the field came to between 151 and 300 pages, another 32 percent ranged from 301 to 500 pages, and 6 percent amounted to 500 pages or more. What's going on here?

James and Babbitt were both right. The Ph.D., as it was imported into the United States from Germany during the heyday of positivism, was neither a teaching certificate (as James pointed out) nor a cachet of culture (as Babbitt stressed). It was essentially a badge of research competence in the sciences, introduced into this country by presidents who were German-trained scientists and monitored for the past century by graduate-school deans who have come preponderantly from fields of science or engineering. (About two-thirds of the fifty-eight deans currently representing their institutions in the Association of Graduate Schools are scientists or engineers: at many universities, moreover, the dean of the graduate school serves concurrently as dean or vice-president or director of research.) For this reason, the worries about the degree have come principally from the humanists—not from the scientists and engineers, who have been generally quite content. (Berelson reported that 64 percent of physicists and 59 percent of mathematicians described the current state of their discipline as "very satisfactory," as opposed to 19 percent in history and 10 percent in English. The level of satisfaction was lowest—6 percent—in the field with the longest average dissertations, political science.)

Why should this be so? Scientists and engineers generally have a keen sense of the state of the art, a consensus regarding the problems that need to be addressed at any given time. Moreover, they have been resourceful over the years in adapting the requirements of the Ph.D. to the needs and practices of their various disciplines. In most sciences the graduate student rapidly becomes affiliated with a group or a laboratory working on a specific problem; the dissertation emerges from, or as a component of, the group's work. The professor often has a personal stake in seeing that piece of the project done competently and expeditiously; otherwise it could delay or jeopardize the entire project. What most dissertations of this sort constitute, to be sure, is not an "original" piece of research, but rather—and perhaps more important—a "contribution" to knowledge certifying the ability to carry out research according to the current standards of the discipline. Accordingly, the "dissertation" is increasingly no longer a monograph in the traditional sense of the word but a presentation according to the publication practices in the field: it often includes material already presented at conferences and published by the candidate and his or her research group. The Ph.D. thus earned does not attest the pedagogical abilities or the cultural sophistication or

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the emotional maturity of the candidate; but it does certify that the degree holder can assume a place smoothly and productively in research groups on other campuses or in non-academic laboratories.

Some social scientists and most humanists bring quite different expectations to the degree. Many regard graduate school not simply as the place to acquire a certain level of knowledge and proficiency in a field but as an open-ended status where the aspiring Ph.D. can sit and "mellow" (like a wine?), "ripen" (like a cheese?), and "grow" (like a vegetable?)—the organic metaphors flourish in the prose of departments seeking more time and support for their students. These expectations were explicit in Irving Babbitt's opposition of Germanic "specialization" to the more humane "growth as a man." But they are still all too often implicit today in the expectations of departments interviewing candidates for their positions. How often is the gifted scholar, who has worked hard to complete the degree in a reasonably short time, passed over for the more "mature" candidate, who has acquired years of teaching experience while laboriously grinding out his or her four hundred pages? In the sciences, new Ph.D.'s are expected to mature in the post-doctoral positions that have there become the norm. But in the humanities and some of the social sciences this process of maturation is increasingly calculated into the degree expectations. They not only want squid—they want mature squid whose plumpness has been induced by hormones! The correlation between time-to-degree and dissertation length makes the skeptical dean sometimes suspect that the dissertation is long because the "ripening" time needs to be filled out, and not vice-versa.

To look at it another way, American humanists and social scientists are increasingly making the same demands upon the Ph.D. that are fulfilled in Germany by the post-doctoral *Habilitationsschrift* or in France by the *thèse d'état*—that is, a major piece of post-doctoral research carried out by a candidate who is already employed as a teacher. Instead of regarding the degree as the beginning of a career—as the certification that the degree holder is now ready to enter the first level of the profession as a teacher and as a scholar—many colleges and universities choose to regard it as proof that the well-ripened recipient has dutifully churned out four hundred pages of carefully documented, though often dull, prose; published several forgettable papers; and taught the same elementary courses many times over. These well-cured Ph.D.'s, in turn, place a burden on the system by occupying the places, and the support, that might otherwise be given to new candidates. If universities do not succeed in getting them through the system more quickly, then they shall surely be unable to meet the demands of the nineties.

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What can be done? In the first place, as James suggested as early as 1903, universities might "lower their fantastic standards" by scaling the Ph.D. in the humanities and social sciences back to what it was originally intended to be and what it still is in many of the sciences and in engineering: not a *Habilitation* but simply, as James put it, "a diploma certifying mastery and marking a barrier successfully passed." The problem does not lie so much in the preliminary phases as in the dissertation. But here much could be improved. Professors should discourage students from undertaking topics that are not reasonable in scope. (The student who boasted in the *New York Times* of August 24, 1989, that he had spent eight years merely identifying a thesis topic was either irresponsibly advised or an unregenerate *ewiger Student*.) Departmental committees should monitor every stage of the process and make sure that the candidate understands the expectation that a reasonable topic can be managed in two or, at most, three years. (The graduate schools, in turn, can establish procedures that make it increasingly difficult for students to submit their dissertations if too much time has elapsed.) Studies of dissertation length and time-to-degree suggest that universities should impose a strict upper limit on theses and refuse to accept those that are too long. This would teach students early in their careers about the realities of publication deadlines and length restrictions. (Excessive length is sometimes an indication, of course, of the thesis adviser's own lack of writing and publishing experience.) Length requirements might also ensure that the dissertation will receive a more conscientious reading than is now often the case, when lengthy tomes are returned to the student without a mark on their pages and with the most cursory of reader's reports. All the studies have shown that few factors affect rapid completion of the Ph.D. as powerfully as a close and encouraging relationship between student and adviser—a relationship that thrives much less easily in the lonely "library disciplines" than in the more convivial laboratory sciences.

The dissertation must continue to be the center of doctoral education. For many Ph.D.'s it will remain the single extended piece of research and writing they will ever do. Even if the dissertation has not made a "contribution" to knowledge, it has made a contribution to the candidate's own knowledge: it should have taught him or her to identify and analyze a reasonable problem in the field, to treat it according to accepted procedures, and to present it in an accessible manner. At the very least, the dissertation as an exercise should prepare the new Ph.D. to organize his or her first college course and to appreciate what it takes to write a good book. (A valuable by-product of this change might be the disappearance of the vanity presses and the series that exist simply to publish, with a heavy subsidy and at expensive prices, the poorly edited

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and usually critically ignored dissertations currently being churned out by the system.)

The humanities might also emulate the sciences (and such social sciences as economics) in their tendency to accommodate the thesis to the current practices of the field. (This is not to suggest approval of the practice in some fields of accepting as dissertations works that amount to published articles bound or stapled together.) At many institutions, the locally approved manual of style has become so dominant and so tyrannically enforced that the candidate comes away with the notion that style matters more than substance. A dissertation should present research results in the format appropriate to the discipline. Why should a student spend hours mastering forms that he or she will never need again? Many a new Ph.D. revising a dissertation for publication has discovered that the first things that must go are the introductory survey of research, the lengthy footnotes, and the cumbersome bibliographical apparatus often required for the dissertation. It would be far more helpful to the student's career as a scholar to learn the style used most widely in journals of the field, to practice the art of selective quotation, and to recite the credo of scholarly ethics. The dissertation should demonstrate the student's command of the basic skills of the discipline. Whether or not the Ph.D. then goes on to use those skills is another matter altogether—one that depends on personal energy, ambition, and a variety of other factors. The degree should be awarded like the doctorate bestowed upon that promising but lazy student in seventeenth-century Avignon recalled by Jacob Viner: *sub spe futuri studii.*

None of these changes can take place until the hiring departments modify what literary critics call their horizon of expectations—and here the entire weight of the history of Ph.D.'s just reviewed drags heavily on the present. If the expectations do not change, the system will produce more and more A.B.D.'s and an inadequate number of Ph.D.'s for the future. Departments should be seeking neither the scholar who has "ripened" long enough in graduate school to have compiled a five-hundred-page (and therefore probably poorly supervised) dissertation nor the scholar who has "matured" long enough to have acquired years of teaching or research experience (and therefore probably a corresponding sense of bitterness at having been exploited by the graduate institution). Departments should instead be happy to appoint well-trained young Ph.D.'s who have demonstrated their commitment by moving expeditiously through a reasonable program to a degree that certifies their competence to begin a career in teaching and scholarship. Let the hiring department participate in the continuing education of new Ph.D.'s, as is the case in many of the sciences, by supervising their development as teachers and scholars. If that happens, Ph.D. shortages

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in the 1990s in the humanities and social sciences will be avoided. In science and engineering, the problems are different: they are not time-to-degree or even attrition but rather recruitment into graduate programs of U.S. citizens adequately motivated and prepared in mathematics and basic science. But that is a problem that reaches back beyond the graduate schools into colleges, secondary schools, and society itself. Indeed, the educational deficiencies of American students have emerged as a national scandal that has concerned blue-ribbon panels and caught the editorial attention of the national journals.

Why should one care about issues that might seem to be the proper and rather specialized concern of the graduate schools? First, more than half of our Ph.D.'s are no longer remaining in the academic cycle but are going into government, industry, and other sectors of our society. The worldwide need for specialists qualified to the level of Ph.D. is going to increase in the coming decade. In a certain sense, our national future depends on the graduate schools. But it is also in the urgent interest of the nation at large to see that the universities recruit and retain graduate students of excellence in every field, from Assyriology to astrophysics, and train them within a reasonable time to assume an appropriate place in a college or university. If universities continue to permit or require students to spend ever longer portions of the most productive period of their lives in graduate school, then the students entering graduate school this year will not yet be finished by the time of the excess demand predicted for the years 1997–2002.

Education can follow either an exhilarating trajectory or a vicious circle. If we do not have the best students with the finest minds in our universities, the institution itself can rapidly decline, as it did in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when the brightest thinkers preferred to be associated with academies—that is, the counterpart of today's non-teaching research institutes—rather than with the universities. The principle of gravity and Gresham's law both provide analogies for intellectual history. Water seeks the lowest level; bad money drives out the good; second-rate scholars don't like competition, either among their peers or among their students. If universities do not succeed in attracting excellent students into graduate programs (in the sciences and engineering) and seeing them through to the Ph.D. within a reasonable time (in the humanities and social sciences), undergraduates in the nineties and the first decades of the new millennium will be taught in a dizzying downward spiral by second- and third-rate Ph.D.'s—and *that* giant Ph.D. Squid would defy not just William James but even Captain Nemo.

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Brothers

TERI PLATT

Those summer evenings
too hot to play ball,
under an elm tree we'd lie,
lost in shadow,
and the grass would be damp
and full of clover,
and we'd pull up fistfuls
to throw at each other,
laughing till our bellies
were like to split

and we'd fall on our backs,
thus to recover.
And hours we'd swear
we lay like that,
our names thrice called
but we, unmoving,
pledged to stay till we'd
counted ten stars,
scanning patches of sky
between boughs. And soon

silence would settle
between us,
and we'd feel how lonely

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it is to be human,
and we'd think how lonely
we had always been,
and we'd wonder if the sky
stretched on forever,
and if life was anything
more than it seemed,

and a moment would come
when we'd think we might cry,
and instinctively then
we'd turn to each other,
on grass-stained knees
fast racing for home,
and we'd each proclaim
we were the faster
and the world would
echo with our laughter.

✪ TERI PLATT's poems have appeared in *Bellowing Ark*.

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However I Miss You

E. B. DE VITO

No matter how I miss you,
I must not mourn you.
I must not send my sorrow
day by day
into other lives and worlds
like a chain of letters
written on notepaper
edged in black.

Xenophon said excess of grief
is madness—
an injury to the living,
and the dead know it not

and yet they may,
as in the folktale of the mother
whose child came to her
in a vision or a dream
to ask her, for his sake,
to dry her tears
because he could not rest
in the shroud she kept so sodden.

However I mourn,
however deep my grief,
I must not, must not
keep you from your sleep.

✪ E. B. DE VITO's poems have appeared in *The New Yorker*, *Saturday Evening Post*, *Commonweal*, and other magazines.

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Fields of Broken Dreams

GEORGE V. HIGGINS

A. BARTLETT GIAMATTI, untimely felled last September 1 at the age of fifty-one, was a rare and genial man of many métiers. His mourners included: the president of the United States; his colleagues on the faculty at Yale, where he had professed and then presided; the presidents of other universities; his fellow scholars of the literature of the Italian Renaissance; the owners of the major-league baseball teams who had lured him away from New Haven to serve first as president of the National League and then as Commissioner of Baseball; the high school coach who had reluctantly informed him back in 1951 that he wasn't good enough to play second base for his high school team in South Hadley, Massachusetts; and the man who ran the sandwich shop near Yale where Giamatti was a Sunday-schmoozing breakfast regular. The New England professor's son appeared to have been at ease wherever he went, never to have met a man who didn't like him, and, except for that high school disappointment (which he assuaged by becoming manager of the team), never to have tackled any task without succeeding at it—always while scrupulously retaining the respect and friendship of the people he had met in his previous capacities. About the only aspect of his history raising a scintilla of suspicion that he might have had a hidden character defect was his lifelong devotion to the Boston Red Sox.

Yet even this exemplary man, somehow contriving what few manage—to become a distinguished figure in the gown without at the same time relinquishing his ties in the town—demonstrably did have an impairment of vision. Scholar of the Renaissance he certainly was, but baseball he insisted upon viewing as a pure romantic. He publicly declared that the game, which he sometimes sneaked away from Yale to watch at Fenway Park, had remained the same as the game he had followed so avidly by radio as a small-town boy in the Pioneer Valley in the 1950s. I think his willingness to make that assertion, as a certified

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intellectual, more than anything else accounted for his executive attractiveness to the provident people who hired him.

He steadfastly professed that abiding faith last year on August 24, eight days before his death, when he announced that he had banned Pete Rose from baseball for the rest of his life, for betting on the game. Rose's 4,256 hits, surpassing Ty Cobb's intimidating career total of 4,191; his relentless drive to win; his insouciance on and off the field, had combined to make him an icon of the game Giamatti had grown in his youth to love. This was surely not the kind of momentous baseball decision that the luckiest clumsy player in the history of South Hadley High had blissfully ascended to baseball eminence to make, but his eloquence in expression of his pain in its making must have been a soothing balm to baseball's worried owners.

"The banishment for life of Pete Rose from baseball is the sad end of a sorry episode. One of the game's greatest players has engaged in a variety of acts which have stained the game, and he must now live with the consequences of those acts," Giamatti said. He said he would act with equal severity if he found anyone else in violation of "the integrity of the game." He explained:

> I say this so that there may be no doubt about where I stand or why I stand there. I believe baseball is a beautiful and exciting game, loved by millions—I among them—and I believe baseball is an important, enduring American institution. It must assert, and aspire to the highest principles—of integrity, of professionalism of performance, of fair play within the rules. It will come as no surprise that like any institution composed of human beings, this institution will not always fulfill its highest aspirations. I know of no earthly institution that does. But this one, because it is so much a part of our history as a people and because it has such a purchase on our national soul, has an obligation to the people for whom it is played—to its fans and well-wishers—to strive for excellence in all things and to promote the highest ideals.
>
> I will be told that I am an idealist. I hope so. I will continue to locate ideals I hold for myself and for my country in the national game as well as in other of our national institutions. . . . The matter of Mr. Rose is now closed. It will be debated and discussed. Let no one think that it did not hurt baseball. That hurt will pass, however, as the great glory of the game asserts itself, and as a resilient institution goes forward. Let it be clear that no individual is superior to the game.

The actual gravamen of what lurked beneath the surface of the Rose case was that Pete Rose had been caught cavalierly replicating the behavior of the people who paid his salary throughout his career—the very same people who were paying Giamatti's on the day he exiled Rose. What Rose had been doing was manipulating his proprietary share of major-league baseball's general franchise to make money that he really wanted. The only difference between his conduct and that of the owners

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was that his had been forbidden, by their commissioners, as dangerous to the franchise, while those overseers had left the proprietors unfettered.

That reality was obscured during its gradual revelation over six months last spring and summer by the details of the messy and complicated charges against Rose, and it stayed hidden afterwards. Those charges grew out of events that at the times of their occurrence appeared to be the personal good fortunes of two other men, and the very bad fortunes of two more.

The lucky bounces: On January 16, 1987, one Thomas Giogiosa appeared at a cashier's window at Turfway Park in Florence, Kentucky, with a Pik Six winning ticket good for $47,646. He identified himself as its purchaser and sole owner—that was a lie—and by completing forms provided to all racetracks by the IRS for use on such occasions, made himself responsible for federal income taxes on the money. On January 25, 1989, one Arnold Metz, also lying, followed the same procedures at the same track, but with two Pik Six tickets worth $255,669.20. The motive for each lie was the same: to reduce the amount of taxes due on each windfall. Such assessments are calculated by reference to the income bracket of the person receiving them; in each of those instances, Pete Rose, top-bracketed by his comfortable salary from baseball, had a taxable ownership interest in the proceeds of the tickets but, in nonchalant disdain for the petty rules involved, condoned if he did not suborn the falsehood that concealed it.

The bad bounces: On June 22, 1987, Michael E. Fry was interrupted at home by some cops who had a search warrant. They found a kilogram of cocaine, twenty pounds of marijuana, two scales, $9,909, and two firearms, one of them a pistol equipped with a silencer, a type of firearm seldom used in sanctioned sport or competition. He pleaded guilty to possession of the cocaine and also to tax fraud, and the following February was sentenced to eight years in federal prison. Few who take an eight-year sentence on the chin embark entirely cheerfully upon the experience; many so afflicted tend to spend their hours in prison brooding resentfully about the continued liberty of others still on the loose, who have blithely done things just as bad.

Six months later, Paul Jantzen, an FBI informer, sold an ounce of cocaine to Ronald Peters, the owner of Jonathan's Cafe in Franklin, Ohio. On August 17, 1988, federal investigators searched his home in Middletown, Ohio, and seized a number of betting slips. He was charged with tax evasion.

Each of the men busted was a pal of Pete Rose's, had the means to acquire sports cars, and spent most of his days and evenings hanging around tracks, gyms, bars—and, in the off-season, Pete. None of them except Peters and Rose appears to have had a steady job. One of them

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had tipped Ron Peters in. Peters told the investigators working with John Dowd, the chief investigator for the baseball commissioner's office, that Rose's gambling action in a year came to around a million bucks. Peters was probably the most favored of at least three bookies whom Rose patronized (Rose generally employing Giogiosa to caddy his bets). Again excepting Rose, these are what the cops call "the wrong type of guys," boulevardiers and free-lance grifters, nickel-diming ham-and-eggers working the nightlife edges of the Mob where the lights are bright and the music is loud, and the ladies are blonde, young, and ample. But stand-up guys they were not.

For prosecutors and investigators, they were the rungs of a classic informer's ladder; you get one guy and sweat him good, and if it works he trades you the hide of someone higher up to save at least a patch of his own skin. Then you talk the second guy some, and he begins to feel sharp pangs of the remorse that leads to repentant candor—about someone else, of course—and so on up the ladder.

Usually when that happens, information previously held in jocular confidence among those privy to dirty business begins to seep into the media. It happened to Rose. His pals cleared their throats. They were common riffraff, sure, but famous buddy, Pete, was *news*, and to law enforcement types, his scalp was trophy size. Bagging him would not disrupt the Mob as the capture of a top consigliere might, but it would generate more headlines and more airtime than ten such true coups would score. The gist of what the boys had to say was that Pete Rose had been high rolling on sports. The sheen on it was that his sporting flutters had included bets on baseball. That was *really* news, news far too interesting to hide.

By February 20, 1989, the oily slick of rumor had widened enough to attract the attention of the then commissioner of baseball, Peter Ueberroth. He invited Rose and his lawyers to confer in New York. Giamatti, winding down his involvement as president of the National League, which includes the Cincinnati Reds, while gearing up to succeed Ueberroth as czar of all major-league baseball, had an official interest in those proceedings. The *New York Times* two days later quoted Ueberroth's laconic summary, in which his choice of pronouns was either crypto-royal or conveyed Giamatti's concurrence: "We asked him [Rose] to do it [attend]. We didn't order him. There's nothing ominous and there won't be any follow-through." Giamatti must be presumed to have known the substance of that statement before Ueberroth made it; if he had reservations then or later about its veracity, he kept them to himself.

Let us endeavor to be charitable here; the statement was at the very least seriously misleading. While Ueberroth blandly denied the existence of omens threatening bad trouble for baseball or for Rose, his

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subordinates were secretly reading entrails noisome and foreboding. The best that can be said for Ueberroth and his cohort is that while ordinary intelligence and later disclosures now preclude supposition that he believed he was telling the whole unvarnished truth when he spoke to the media, he may have considered the circumstances sufficiently exigent to excuse if not justify its falsity. Discretionary ethical relativism is not, after all, uncommon among guardians of billion-dollar monopolies, which baseball surely is, and Ueberroth plainly practiced it that day: on March 20, his office (that was cute: "offices" are much harder to grill about enigmatic utterances than actual people are) announced that Washington attorney John Dowd, formerly of the U.S. Department of Justice, had been hired to lead an inquiry. When I asked Dowd late last summer how he among all Washington lawyers had come to be chosen for that assignment, he said that he had been a classmate of Fay Vincent's at the Yale Law School and had remained his close friend. Vincent, of course, was a close friend of A. Bartlett Giamatti.

Now there are Washington lawyers and then there are other Washington lawyers. Many of them worked at the Justice Department before entering private practice. The good ones, supplied with two hundred pounds of soapless Brillo pads, can knit you a stove in a week. But when you go out to hire such a lawyer, you know exactly what sort of stove you need. Mere general competence is not usually what you have in mind. What you are seeking is expertise, savvy in a particular field. In the context of the Rose inquiry, to term John Dowd a lawyer formerly at Justice was equivalent to describing Alvin York in a military history as an American army sergeant in World War I.

Dowd was an ex-Mob prosecutor. He had joined the Justice Department in 1972, in the Tax Division, becoming attorney-in-charge of Strike Force 18, the first of the floating Organized Crime Field Offices with commissions to rove at will among all U.S. jurisdictions in search of prosecutable cases against individuals identified as important in La Cosa Nostra. Among his special subjects was Meyer Lansky, who died before he could be tried on charges alleging he had been the Mafia's comptroller general and chief investment officer. When Giamatti activated Vincent's connection with Dowd at least twelve days before Giamatti formally succeeded Ueberroth as commissioner, everyone in that office, including Giamatti, was pretty much convinced that the attar of Rose's case was the perfume of the Mob, and that was a powerful danger to baseball.

They were right, of course. For confirmation of that threat they had only to consult the minatory memory of the peril that the Chicago Black Sox had posed to the endurance of the game, when Shoeless Joe Jackson and seven teammates threw the 1919 World Series (against Rose's

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hometown team, the Cincinnati Reds), mutinously accepting bribes from big-time gamblers to augment their mingy salaries. That convulsion was the impetus that had intimidated the then owners into ceding at least some of their monopolistic powers to the central office, installing federal judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis, an indifferent jurist at best, as commissioner and as draconian avenger of the wrong and overseer of new rules to prevent it from ever happening again. Among them was Rule 21(d), prominently placarded in every major-league clubhouse:

Any player, umpire, or club or league official or employee, who shall bet any sum whatsoever upon any baseball game in connection with which the bettor has no duty to perform, shall be declared ineligible for one year.

Any player, umpire, or club or league official or employee, who shall bet any sum whatsoever upon any baseball game in connection with which the bettor has a duty to perform shall be declared permanently ineligible.

Giamatti, while describing his decision as "the banishment for life of Pete Rose from baseball," did not specifically cite either of those provisions explicitly in his prepared statement. That was prudent; to have done so would have been to complicate interpretation of his written agreement with Rose.

That contract, analogous to a plea bargain negotiated between prosecutor and defense counsel in a criminal case that both wish to resolve quickly, had it both ways. It recited the mutual understanding that Rose had been declared "permanently ineligible" under Rule 21, but retained his right to apply for reinstatement under Rule 15(c)(1), which in substance empowers the commissioner to declare ineligible any player who brings disgrace upon the game, but allows the prodigal to grovel for a pardon after one year. Giamatti's use of the word "permanently" implied that Rose had been cashiered under the second part of 21(d); Rose's statement, issued the same day, denied for about the ten thousandth time that he had ever bet on baseball, and recited his explicit reservation of his option to seek clemency, thus connoting that the punishment had been imposed pursuant to the first part. The language so tortured resembled the prose of a civil consent decree, whereby the accused is permitted to persist in his denial that he did any wrong in exchange for his solemn promise not to do it again. The device formally establishes no culpability; what it does is get rid of a dispute that portends clear victory for neither party, but constitutes a vexing problem, sort of like a fungus affliction, for both so long as it continues.

For Rose the advantage was plain: he was taking a shellacking in the media, and as their darling creature—all non-abusive modern players are—could not have been enjoying it a lot. But because he had by

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sedulous cultivation of the media come to represent baseball to so many people—adoringly alleged as he was to symbolize the panache of the game at its best—the whole enterprise itself was getting a good drubbing too. *Falsus in una, falsus in omnia* is nothing more than legal shorthand for a logical exercise of daily application in all walks of life; so long as Rose steadfastly persisted in blatant prevarication, so long would "the great glory of the game," in Giamatti's phrase, be further "stained."

That patina of myth is what causes the turnstiles to clank each season toward new records of attendance. Giamatti's—and my (formerly)—beloved Red Sox played like a surly bunch of slackers, oafs, brats, and misfits last season, but still attracted more than 2.5 million onlookers, averaging nearly 31,000 for each of their eighty-one home dates. That was slightly higher than the 2.12 million average; the other twenty-five major-league teams drew a total of 53 million. And it should be kept in mind that those throngs at the games were not important merely for what they personally spent to attend; their bodies in the seats were also props essential to the commercial attractiveness of the performances to network and cable television, which discern no appeal in events no one will pay to watch. Last year, the Major League Players Association estimated—never having been vouchsafed copies of the actual contracts—that the TV commercial value of the coming four years of weekend, All-Star, play-off, and World Series baseball rights would be about $1.5 billion, working out to slightly under $58 million per club for the term, $14.5 million a year. And that still leaves regional TV and radio rights to be disposed of by the separate clubs, before one currently priced two-buck hot dog is sold. Put it this way: an average major-league baseball franchise is a dead lock, as Rose's friends might put it, to gross more than $40 million a year, so long as the fans continue to accept the premise that it really is the best game still, played on the up-and-up. When Giamatti talked about the glory of the game, its purity brought under scrutiny by Rose's behavior, his actual subject was big money—a fact he wished on no account to emphasize just then.

That was because, as Bart Giamatti surely must have known, the activities being foisted off these days—and far more often, nights—are only superficially unchanged from the games we watched when we were young. Look at the numbers.

In Rose's twenty-four years of active duty, only five teams with regular-season records (I'm throwing out strike year '81, a debacle to be usefully recalled only as an omen for this coming season, as the Basic Agreement with players expires) under .586—95 wins, 67 losses—have reached the World Series. At the end of last season, the Oakland A's, at .611, were the only outfit on either circuit to have achieved that minimum percentage: they had 99 wins. Toronto won the American

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League East with 89–72, .549; Chicago with 93 wins took the National League East at .574; San Francisco won the National League West with 92, .568.

This is metastasizing expansion catching up with both leagues at last, and now the lords of baseball are rumored to be plotting more. The rumors are almost certainly true. If you owned an existing league franchise worth at minimum $100 million, and you knew you'd get one-twelfth of the initiation fee paid for a new National League club, one-fourteenth of an American; if you could see a galaxy of fresh markets gleaming in cities now unserved, you'd give it some thought too. Well, those markets are out there, begging for new teams. The minor-league Buffalo Bisons have drawn a million for their second consecutive year. Cities in Florida attracting shifting population are restive about having no big-league games in the summer. Denver is grouchy. Folks who left major-league cities to go to Washington for their share of federal plunder have been outraged since Bob Short took his 1961 expansion (ersatz) Senators to Texas in the second orgy in 1971. And if that is not enough to hint at what is coming: the well-known philanthropist Donald Trump has made appalling noises about starting a new league.

Further debasement of the coinage of the sport is inevitable. The reservoir of personnel trained or trainable for competition at the major-league level is depleted. Expansion into previously untapped population centers came after TV had first euthanized the minor leagues that culled raw material for the big clubs (when Giamatti was growing up, there were more than fifty of them; nineteen remained at the start of the seventies), drying up the established source of replacement personnel. So as major-league baseball during Rose's years gradually increased its appetite for competent professional athletes from 400 roster places to the current 624, fewer and fewer young men entered training for it, and professional football, basketball, tennis, hockey, wrestling, golf, and even bowling began to compete with serious money for their services.

The late Mr. Giamatti's employers have not been by any means wholly successful in the ensuing financial competition for nimble fresh recruits (although last autumn's orgy of $3-million-per-year contracts may do much to restore baseball's attractiveness to agile lads). The result is that we are now paying major-league prices in American money to watch a great many people who do not know how to play the major-league variety of the sport and seem disinclined to learn, or maybe can't be taught. Rudimentary skills are now prized evidence of godliness. Broadcasting encomiasts, each now as ever a shill for his home team, are transported by delights on those rare occasions when some young mogul on the mound craftily contrives to begin his delivery without licensing enemy base runners to steal with impunity, and all but swoon when he

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so artfully completes it that he is able to field smoothly hard ground balls hit back to him. When some precocious capitalist athlete not only evinces the uncommon selflessness to lay down a sacrifice bunt for the greater good of the team, but actually displays the minimal dexterity to accomplish his generous purpose, paeans of rapture follow. Former Red Sox, Indians, and Tigers reliever Dick Radatz (1962–69) put the matter well: "I saw Rico Petrocelli [Red Sox shortstop, third baseman, 1963–76] at one of our Old Timers' games, and I said: 'Jesus, Rico, I'm seeing guys out there that couldn't've played Double A ball when you and I were playing.' And he said: 'It's a fact. Guys're now learning how to play baseball in the big leagues.' "

If the owners know this, and they do, it should come as no surprise to learn that throwback take-no-prisoners players, such as Rose was in his heyday, have also smartened up. Some of them go all out on the field just as the ancients of our youthful days did, but they do so generally only when playing out their option years, in cynical awareness that such dirty-shirted dedication now brings prompt beatification by the media, and thus lots more money—as it did not in those bygone days when such exertion was the norm, and those who did not meet it were discharged. "Charlie Hustle," Rose's sobriquet in the laid-back seventies, was more than a colorful baseball moniker; it was box-office, prime inventory, and Rose knew it. It ought therefore to have startled no one that from the inception to the end of the hoo-ha over his gambling addiction he denied steadfastly and incredibly that he ever bet on baseball. Betrayed into stammering consternation by his playtime cronies, he fell back in his confusion upon modern baseball's most familiar strategem: pretend as long as possible that everything is fine, and when that no longer works, deny the obvious.

But his choice of that defense, perhaps because it was not rational but reflexive, exposed a fact worse than the one that he was trying to conceal. Psychiatrists tell us that lying about what one has done in order to hide what has made one do it shows the mechanism of massive denial in operation, a dead giveaway that the person electing it fears that his admission of guilt to the offense alleged will lead to discovery of something that in his contemplation is much more serious. Pete Rose was addicted to gambling, and so severe was his condition of servitude that, although he later grudgingly owned up to it, in general terms, and announced he had submitted himself to our secular culture's equivalent of penitential shriving and absolution—therapy—he still persisted in his denial that it had ever reduced him to wagering on baseball.

It is always distressing when some person of supposedly mature years, celebrated, if not for all practical purposes incarnated, by our popular culture, publicly confesses that he has ruined his life by

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inability to control his own behavior. But there was a special poignance in the spectacle of Rose's partial self-abasement: in his case the addict had spent his entire adult life working for addicts. The only difference between him and his employers was that they were addicted to the practice of deceits that provided them with lots of money to pay the likes of him, while he by selling his talent to them at high prices obtained the means that he employed to acquire his addiction. The trouble was that his addictive behavior threatened the owners' enjoyment of theirs. That was when Rose progressed from the expendable status of all players and managers—to be discarded once their usefulness expires—and became a dangerous liability, hazardous cargo to be jettisoned at once.

The people who run major-league baseball are merciless in execution of such regrettable decisions. They depend on the generally decent, lunch-bucket, barroom Good Joes like Pete Rose to slide on their bellies and generally raise hell, and on those who can't play themselves to pay money to see guys who can. They deny unpleasant realities—for instance, the career-damaging effects of staging the games on cement padded with nylon and called "artificial turf"; the debilitating effects of coast-to-coast travel necessitated by expansion—as routinely as their players do. They do it all the time; it's a matter of major-league policy. They never admit they put on a shoddy show because they have the data proving that we will pay to watch it anyway, or that they will survive if we stay home and pout, because the networks already have paid. They never say, on the record, that perhaps one or two people may bet on the games, concede that it is by no means uncommon for some of them to lose control, or address the fact that gambling is part of the Pete Rose culture that nurtures their players in their youth, exalts them as champions larger than life during their active years, and enlivens things for such loyal fans by enabling them to amplify their vicarious participation in the games by acquiring a personal stake in the outcomes: by betting.

Pete Rose, like Giamatti, never in his fame became inaccessibly too fine for his old associates. The difference was that Rose, born in Cincinnati, unlike Giamatti never really left the hard-guys' milieu. Giamatti progressed through many cultures during his illustrious career, meeting as most of us do the expectations of his peers of all kinds, and he was welcomed and accepted as a member of each stratum. Rose's fame was certainly much greater and far wider, as his humiliation would subsequently be, but he was a guest in transit when he sampled other lives. He was not a postulant in them; he gained or sought no different colleagues. The values and the standards of the wise guys on the street were the ones he had grown up with; he never questioned them because he never saw them challenged. Street wisdom, the kind that prompts a smart rich guy to have his tapped-out buddy cash the tickets at the track

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because the taxes will be lower, had made him rich and famous—it had worked damned well for him. Small wonder that he never really left the cocky young life that he knew; he never had a reason.

Review the man's resumé. He was barely twenty-two years old in his rookie season, when he played 157 games and batted .273 in 1963. When he went to the Phillies in a free-agent signing fifteen years after his debut, he was almost certainly pathologically hooked on gambling. There is now reason to surmise he left the town that idolized him because he needed that four-year, now-modest $2.98 million deal to pay off gambling debts. When he took a hike from the Phillies to the Montreal Expos in January of 1984, again as a free agent, he went once more for the money—there was no suggestion that he went to Canada to elevate his morals. And the Reds, reclaiming him that August in exchange for Tom Lawless, did not suggest publicly that they were moved by concern for the hometown hero's spiritual welfare; the team's owner, Marge Schott, brought him back because she was desperate for some savior to convince once-rabid fans that there was once more a reason to go to Riverfront to watch a 51–69 ball club (under Rose they remained mediocre, 19–23, but at least Pete was home again). She and those other owners signed him, rehired him, lured him away, and purchased him back because they thought they would make a profit doing so, and that was precisely the same reasoning that impelled him in the end to play the game the way he did, *hard*: to get his cut of the dough that rolled in from doing it that way.

Twenty-six years later, the forty-eight-year-old man stood accused in substance and effect of acting upon the partial list of rules that he had learned at twenty-two. The only thing most of us knew when we were lippy at twenty-two was that we knew everything, but we know now we were wrong. We obtained that knowledge from kindly elders of our chosen professions, who, declining to entrust their traditions to brash nincompoops, patiently acquainted the more fortunate among us with hard details and expectations of the new real worlds we'd entered. So, if humble enough to be chastened, we commenced at least intermittently to sense camouflaged dangers and to think clearly, and we have gotten along better since. When Pete Rose got in big trouble, for his failure to do that, he faced judgment by men like us, regretfully applying rules that for several years he had *known* did not apply to him.

Rose, so street-smart in the ways of ball and Cincinnati that the road to Riverfront was named for him while he still worked there, never did confess his wise-guy, fast-cash attitudes to the media that so joyously until last year promoted his hometown adoration. To have done so would have allowed the worshippers a glimpse of the inner workings of the game that would have needlessly upset them and, therefore, he could be

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certain, would dismay its overlords. It must have come as a profound shock to him when he realized at last that his personal excesses—once they had been revealed by his no-longer-raffish chums and buddies as they thought about the slammer and became garrulous—really would require his bosses to terminate his services with extreme prejudice. Which, given his lifelong, consuming, and passionate devotion to them and their games—he was at least as romantic in his total commitment to them as A. Bartlett Giamatti had been as a spectator—was tantamount to becoming aware that they had put out a contract on him.

I believe that Pete Rose told the truth when he found himself in his terrifying dilemma and pathetically protested he had never bet on baseball. I believe he told the truth, but not the whole truth, and he did not limit what he said to averments that were true. I think that Pete Rose quite virtuously never bet on baseball *until* his losses on football and other sports became so staggering that he could no longer cover them by signing over his paychecks and selling off his trophies. Then, like a love-struck banker dipping into the deposits, he succumbed at last to betting on the sport he knew the best, from the inside out. He was just trying to get even. I doubt very much that he ever pulled a pitcher, changed a lineup, or did any other thing to "adjust" game outcomes in his favor on the books, but I do not doubt for one moment that he gleaned from all his contacts every shred of data that he could, to calibrate his bets. When he said he didn't do it, his statement was too short; the whole truth was that he never did it until it became necessary, and then he saw no choice.

That same apprehension of necessitous circumstance was probably the reason why Giamatti did what he did, when he offered his stirring defense of the game that now peddles its degraded contemporary product packaged in its former glory. Speaking for the owners who have managed thus far, notwithstanding their worst efforts, to retain the option to pretend that everything is fine—the one Rose had exhausted—he stoutly defended walls that though standing have been badly undermined, and not just by Pete Rose. But it seems to have worked, at least for now. The second romantic was the more prudent of the two, uttering only those nice reassuring fibs that he believed the country wanted told, and does not wish to see refuted. And after all, as April comes around again and another season beckons, we faithful fans can all agree: he had no other choice.

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Robert Maynard Hutchins

EDWARD SHILS

ROBERT MAYNARD HUTCHINS was the most handsome man I have ever seen, a man of natural elegance in bearing and manners. It is not just that he was tall and graceful in form and movement, extremely well proportioned in his figure, and with fine strong and regular facial features. He had the most illuminated and enchanting smile, both elevated and kindly at the same time. His voice was a dry, clear monotone; it carried a slight overtone of the speaker's distaste or distrust of his audience. His voice did not distract from the matter which his words treated; it was a perfect vehicle for his lucid, almost geometrical thoughts. He always spoke in sentences which were short and perfectly formed; he never rambled and byways did not tempt him from his theme. When he wrote, he did so in the most economical way. When he replied to questions or criticisms, he never fumbled or evaded; he always had a clear and succinct reply.

I first heard of Robert Hutchins when, as an undergraduate at the University of Pennsylvania, I read in the *New York Times* about his collision with the department of philosophy of the University of Chicago. I knew very little about universities at that time, except that they should be selflessly and disinterestedly given over to learning without regard for practical ends or profit. Veblen's *Higher Learning in America* had not startled me when I first read it as a student. It made it appear that trustees and presidents were obstacles to the realization of the idea of the university, not friends of learning. So that when I read of the philosophers' resistance to Hutchins, I thought he must be one more of those presidents who treat their professors as hired hands. Although Veblen's book was supposed to be about the University of Chicago, it did not affect my conviction, formed—first from hearsay and then by reading books by Chicago professors—that the University of Chicago was the American equivalent of the University of Berlin. Hutchins's troubles

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with the department of philosophy I interpreted as one more instance of those cases I had read about in which the higher powers of the university torment the lower powers—trustees tormenting presidents and presidents joining with the trustees in tormenting the teaching staff. Despite Veblen I exempted the University of Chicago which I thought to be exceptional in its professors, but I did not exempt its president whom I thought, ignorantly, to be just another university president.

I was wrong about Robert Hutchins. He, too, turned out to be exceptional. In one important respect, however, in his desire to guide his university according to his own lights, he resembled the great generation of university presidents of the end of the century, among them William Rainey Harper, Daniel Coit Gilman, Charles Eliot, and G. Stanley Hall. Nonetheless, he was—like the university which he tried to reshape—very different from all others in his class. The tragedy began when Hutchins's one major legacy from the presidents with whom he otherwise had so little in common combined with his clear and simple intellectual convictions to enter into frontal collision with a body of professors no less tenacious in their own different idea of a university.

One of my contemporaries had gone to Chicago as a research assistant in econometrics, and when he came back to Philadelphia in the summer of 1932, he was full of wondrous tales about the economists Frank Knight and Jacob Viner; he also dropped a few remarks about the young president having set the university on its ear. Nothing more than that. When I came to Chicago, naturally, I heard much more of him, although I was not close enough to the professors to discern the meaning of the hum which was audible but unintelligible to a newly arrived outsider. I saw him once on the walk behind the Harper Library where he had his office. His face bore the signs of awareness that those who looked upon him must be conscious of his presidency and its powers. He also looked as if he thought that the environment in which he lived was inferior to him and that he should not bend himself to it. This was just a fleeting impression.

A year later, when I was a research assistant at the University of Chicago, I lived in a university building. I became acquainted with graduate students in many different fields, and I began to hear rumors that Hutchins was seeking to impose scholastic philosophy on the University of Chicago, that he wished to suppress the social sciences, that he wished to put down science and reduce scientific study to the study of the classical scientific writings of antiquity and early modern times. It was said that Hutchins wished to replace the study of the modern world by the study of the classics of antiquity and the Middle Ages, that he wished to replace research by ratiocination. It was also said

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that, in addition to giving the armchair precedence over the laboratory bench or the research seminar, Hutchins, though not himself a Catholic, was also attempting to promote Roman Catholicism.

I also began to have opportunities to witness the dispute at closer range. At that distance, the contentions, as I saw them, seemed rather beside the point. There was no doubt, however, that they were being taken as matters of life and death—at least by some of the disputants. Soon after I became assistant to the late Louis Wirth, then an associate professor of sociology and one of the "coming men" at the University, I was made privy to some of the dire things which Hutchins was said to have in hand for the University. Louis Wirth mentioned to me his frequent meetings with Harry Gideonse, Frank Knight, and others, in which the menace presented by Hutchins's conception of the ideal curriculum and his strictures on American university education were gone over with a fine-tooth comb. I was allowed to read memoranda denouncing Hutchins's educational plans, which, according to his opponents, were centered on the undoing of the intellectual advances of modern times. The speeches of Hutchins were worked over with the care which, in later decades, speeches by Soviet politicians were studied by Kremlinologists.

Such courses of instruction as I attended had absolutely nothing to do with this controversy, which seemed to be fought out in memoranda Louis Wirth had occasionally shown me, in the lectures and articles of Hutchins and Mortimer Adler, and in the juvenile partisanship of the undergraduate newspaper, *The Maroon*—I think at that time it was called *The Daily Maroon*—which, at least for one year in the middle of the 1930s, was edited by a youth named John Barden, a sort of poor man's William F. Buckley, Jr., before his time. It is at least fifty years since I last saw any of the editorials written on behalf of Hutchins and Adler by Barden, but I recall them as being exasperating even to one who was not attracted by the views espoused by Wirth and Gideonse; Gideonse used to annotate Barden's writings, and post them on the bulletin board of the College. Aside from being an inappropriate thing for a grown man to do, it encouraged the delusions of the undergraduate editor about the importance of his activity in the stirring struggle for the triumph of the intellect and the unity of knowledge over anti-intellectual specialization and the fragmentation of knowledge, which was what the debate at the University of Chicago was supposed to be about. It was clear to me that Barden was having the time of his life in insulting one group of his elders in order to please another group of them. At the same time, his professorial adversaries were throwing the fat into the fire and dust into their own eyes by resorting to a similar rhetoric.

What impressed me at that time was the vehemence with which the

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debate was conducted. In alliance with Hutchins, Mortimer Adler was a person of a strong intelligence inclined toward schematic constructions and of an expository skill as pleasing to the ear as a machine gun. His pronouncements in their way were as vexing as Barden's by their dogmatic aggressiveness and in their reduction of the issues to first principles that were extremely simplified and very far from self-evident. The argument as well as the manner forced the debate onto questions which no reasonable man would discuss. Thus the debate raged furiously about spurious issues. President Hutchins did not engage directly in the public debate, as far as I can recall, except through the lectures which he delivered outside the university. His own contributions on those occasions were extremely lucid; they were also very simplistic and exaggerated in their cool and condescending rhetoric. The intensity of feeling and acrimony of expression of the opponents—Wirth, Gideonse, and Knight on the one side, and Barden and Adler on the other—had nothing in common with the detached serenity of Hutchins's assumption of the patent validity of what he said. Nonetheless, Hutchins himself did not improve matters much.

Hutchins, too, argued by hyperbole, distorted the position he opposed, and was as schematic and as unrealistic as Adler. He always argued like a man reasonably explaining obvious things to the wrongheaded, though entirely without the rabid tone which accompanied Adler's unpleasantly self-confident deductions. Although Hutchins was much criticized, I began to see that those who were wrought up by Hutchins were not wrought up as much by Hutchins as they were by Mortimer Adler and to a smaller extent by Arthur Rubin, whom Adler had brought to the University to serve as a member of a committee on liberal arts created presumably on Hutchins's request by Richard McKeon, then dean of the division of the humanities. Richard McKeon was one of the Hutchins party but he did not arouse so much antagonism. Stringfellow Barr and Scott Buchanan, two other prominent allies of Hutchins, were not mentioned often. It was mainly Mortimer Adler who aroused the animosity of the three-man party of opposition of Gideonse, Knight, and Wirth.

I had of course heard about Adler first when I read of Hutchins's conflict with the department of philosophy. I heard more about him after I came to Chicago. As I recall, I first saw him and heard him when I attended a seminar in the Social Science Research Building in the mid-1930s. That seminar still stands out in my memory as one of the more offensive academic performances I have seen. The subject was obviously an impossible one. That it was pretentious and naive in its very title, "Systematic Social Science," and was very sloppy, too, in spite of its implication of deductive rigor, was not the most reprehensible part.

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What was much worse was the angry imperiousness of Adler's opening exposition. The domineering tone with which he spoke was very disproportionate to the modesty called for by the meager substance of his argument. He slapped the table repeatedly and resoundingly with his palm to add weight to his declarations. He looked very angry; he seemed to surge with impatience. After not many minutes of Adler's exposition, when it was still far from complete, Wirth began a series of interruptions. Wirth, unlike Adler, had a rather soft and melodious voice which always sounded reasonable and thoughtful even when it said unreasonable things about which he had not thought very much.

As far as I can recall, Adler was speaking with angry self-assurance about a subject of which he understood very little, while Wirth, who knew more than Adler about the literature of the social sciences, was defending these disciplines in terms which had no correspondence with what was contained in that literature. Soon the seminar became very unpleasant. Neither of the antagonists would allow the other to finish a statement; each became angrier but Wirth gained the upper hand by his mellifluous interruptions.

After the seminar finished in smoldering incoherence, Wirth strode from the room like a successful street-corner youth who was proud of having frustrated the renowned bully from a nearby street. Adler gave off clouds of fury as he put his papers into his case. Wirth had certainly not made a case for social science against Adler's claim that social science could be practiced only on the foundation of a syllogistic system constituted by question-begging definitions and problematical derivations pretending to be logical. His statements had no connection with what was being done in the social sciences and what could reasonably be expected of them. He should have known better. Adler presented an argument which was of no intellectual value; he seemed to have no grasp of what any society was like. Neither Wirth nor Adler attempted in this seminar to understand the other's argument. It was a dispute in which the antagonism of each disputant toward the other was more prominent than the effort to criticize or to justify —or to propose a better alternative to—what was being done in the social sciences in the building where the wrangle took place.

Frank Knight was the one participant in these disputes who was intellectually far superior to all the others, but he least of all could resist the temptation to be drawn into any discussion with a remote ecclesiastical or theological penumbra. It was that penumbra which obsessed Adler's detractors; Adler did nothing to dispel it. This was a misfortune for Hutchins in these years at the University of Chicago. He had ideas about the organization of the University which would have given rise to opposition in any case, but the opposition would never have been so

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obstinate and acrimonious had it not been for that unnecessary theological penumbra that Mortimer Adler's and his own arguments lent it.

Knight was a man of deep intellectual penetration. He had been a very distinguished economist of subtle and acute moral perception; he had widely ranging intellectual interests and a rare skill in getting to fundamentals, but he was also easily aroused to cutting disapproval. He was especially irascible in his response to anything in which he suspected even a trace of ecclesiastical dogmatism. He had come from a family of devoted adherents to a primitive Protestant sect and had become a rationalistic unbeliever—almost in some respects a village atheist. Nevertheless, all his life he had been fascinated by religion. He was irresistibly drawn to theology, but he was no less resistant to any belief. He enjoyed the company of a few professors in the faculty of divinity and had great liking and respect for them. (Once, late in his life, he told me that he had difficulty in sleeping and when I asked why, he said, "It's that religion. I think about it all night. I can't get it off my mind.") The odors of Rome were too much for an unbeliever of Protestant sectarian origins, and he regarded President Hutchins as in some way a remote agent of the Pope.

There was another incident of which I was a spectator. That was a debate between Mortimer Adler and Anton J. Carlson, a professor of physiology. Carlson was a crusty old character, much beloved by his students and colleagues; he had the gait and accent of a Swedish-American carpenter. The debate took place in Mandel Hall, the largest hall in the University, and was conducted before an audience which filled every seat. It was a shabby performance; each participant was obstinately inattentive to what the other said. Adler was quicker, more syllogistic in his rhetoric, and gave a quite false impression of rigor and clarity. He also seemed to be unaware of what scientists do. Carlson was simply astonished that something so self-evident as his beloved science could be challenged by a person who was not a scientist and who understood nothing of it. He was intellectually speechless and, in his own rustic, plebeian way, demagogic. It was a vaudeville show, not an intellectual debate. Yet the audience went for it because it enjoyed a brawl.

Mr. Harry Ashmore, who is an experienced journalist, remarkable for his civil courage in the South during the early stages of the struggle for civil rights, has written a long, thoroughly scholarly biography of Hutchins (*Unreasonable Truths: The Life of Robert Maynard Hutchins*, Little, Brown and Company). He has meticulously described the conflicts of which Hutchins was the center at the University of Chicago. Since Mr. Ashmore was closely associated with Hutchins at the Fund for the Republic, the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, and the Center for the

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Study of Democratic Institutions in the last decades of Hutchins's life, his history of Hutchins's activities at the University of Chicago is less rich than is his account of the second phase of Hutchins's career. But even about the University of Chicago, Ashmore tells much that is worth knowing. His account of the dispute about the "four-year college" is the best there is. It seems to me to show that Hutchins's program had nothing to do with theology or Adlerian rhetoric.

The story of Hutchins and the College of the University of Chicago begins at Columbia University. In 1917, Professor John Erskine devised a course of study of classics of Western thought and literature for officer-candidates of the United States Army, being trained at Plattsburg, New York. It was introduced as a course in Columbia College in 1921. Erskine and Mark Van Doren were largely responsible for conducting this course. Mortimer Adler was brought into it well after it had become a going concern. When Adler went to Yale in 1927 to see Hutchins, at Hutchins's invitation, to discuss the possible contribution of psychological research to the study of law, the classics of Western civilization had long been established in the general honors program for undergraduates at Columbia College. Between his visit to Hutchins in 1927 and his arrival in Chicago in 1930, Adler underwent something of a conversion from his belief in empirical social science, including experimental social psychology, to metaphysical philosophy. After Hutchins became president of the University of Chicago, he and Adler conducted a class in "the great books" for a small number of undergraduates.

I occasionally met students who had attended this course. They were ecstatic about it. I once attended a class to see what it was like and was sorry to see as harsh a piece of academic browbeating of a student as I have ever witnessed, carried out by Mortimer Adler. Table slapping was as much a part of the technique of interpretation of texts as it had been part of the techniques of exposition of "systematic social science." Hutchins, in contrast with Adler, was indulgent, even affectionate toward the students; he tried to reformulate their stumbling words so that they could discover what they dimly intended, and he did it with a remote but real kindliness. Adler's and Hutchins's procedures, different as they were from each other, made a remarkably effective combination. Those students who survived Adler's harsh schoolmasterly style looked back upon the "great books courses" as a glorious moment in the history of their education.

I do not have the impression that Hutchins had given any serious thought to undergraduate education when he was a professor and then dean at the Yale Law School. His own undergraduate years at Oberlin before his military service and at Yale after it, apparently did not stir him

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intellectually; nor did he revolt against it. He thought well of his years at Oberlin. He seems to have thought poorly of the undergraduate curriculum and culture at Yale in the 1920s, with its football games, parties, and fraternities and the elective system which was a miscellany of specialized, unconnected courses taught by teachers who abhorred going beyond the boundaries of their special fields. But Hutchins probably did not give any thought to how it could be improved. When he went to Chicago in 1929 to be president at the age of thirty, he probably did not have any definite ideas about undergraduate education. Nevertheless, the reconstruction of undergraduate education became his chief interest once he became president.

The rearrangement of undergraduate education at Chicago had been in hand since the accession of Charles Burton to the presidency of the University in 1923. The idea of survey courses had already been broached. The College Curriculum Committee came into existence early in the second year of Hutchins's presidency, the same year in which he began to teach "the great books" course with Adler.

The survey courses, the "four-year college," and "the great books" course were not identical, but, to the blurred vision of outsiders and to the partisans in the unpleasant wrangles at the University of Chicago, they became somehow amalgamated with one another. Adler, Roman Catholicism, and scholastic philosophy had even less to do with them, but all were thrown into a single pot by Hutchins's opponents, and by some of his partisans.

Much of Hutchins's fame was formed about the survey courses, and much of his affection as well as his hopes went to the College, in which the survey courses were the main thing. There were other features of the College to which Hutchins attached importance, such as the admission of students after the completion of two years of secondary school and the awarding of the bachelor's degree after the completion of what in the older style would be called the sophomore year. Much attention was given to these latter innovations; they were trivial. Their failure was of no consequence that I could see, and their temporary success caused much resentment among Hutchins's antagonists within the University. There was also much passion put into the discussions of the problem about whether all the survey courses should be required and whether a limited range of elections from among them and from other more specialized one-quarter courses should be allowed. As I remember, the question was argued primarily with regard to extreme alternatives.

Hutchins believed that the College should be a completely self-governing body within the University, with its own staff, its own criteria of appointment and promotion, and without regard for the requirements of the specialized departments which made up the four divisions of the

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University: the divisions of the humanities, the social sciences, the biological sciences, and the physical sciences. Hutchins succeeded in establishing such an arrangement sometime during the war. I think it was a mistake, and it generated much resentment, which flowed into the already overflowing stream of acrimony in which Hutchins was inundated by the polemics of his protégés and partisans and of his equally irrational antagonists. Participation in the disputes was widespread.

As I recall, a sizable fraction of the opponents of Hutchins's proposals were against them because they saw the cloven hoof of Adler getting inside the door. The College was caught in the exchange of fire between two forces remote from each other: those who wished to reorganize learning to place philosophy, as Mortimer Adler understood it, at the center and those in the divisions who were defending their positions even though they were not endangered by the proposed reforms. As a matter of fact, the work of the divisions which covered the third and fourth undergraduate years and all the graduate work went on as it had before. Neither Hutchins nor Adler had any plans for the divisions and, except for a few appointments which turned out to have both positive and negative effects, he left them to themselves. Under the arching shells and the din, the teaching of survey or comprehensive courses in the College made its way.

Until I began to teach in the College in 1938, I did not know anything about the College survey courses except those in the social sciences. There was certainly no trace of the alleged "medievalizing" or "romanizing" influence which their enemies attributed to Hutchins, Adler, and the rest in the social sciences survey courses—at least as long as Gideonse and Wirth dominated them. I do not think that they contained any assigned book written before the middle of the eighteenth century; and for the most part, the required readings were relatively contemporary. I did not think the social science surveys, as they existed when I first became familiar with them, were on a very high intellectual level, although many very intelligent students—among them Paul Samuelson—have looked back upon them with a profound sense of indebtedness. When, at the end of the decade, I began to have some influence, I revamped "the second-year survey" from beginning to end. The writings of Locke, Milton, and Hobbes were introduced and so were those of Max Weber, Frank Knight, Georg Simmel, A. V. Dicey, John Dickinson, Charles McIlwain, and R. H. Tawney. Again, there was no sign of any "romanizing"—that is, Catholicizing—influence, which Hutchins's antagonists claimed to be his intention. I do not know what he thought about it, but I never had any intimation of his displeasure at what I had done.

The fact that Hutchins wished me to stay at the University of Chicago

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when I was appointed to the University of London just after the Second World War, and then again urged me to return to Chicago at the end of the 1940s was clear evidence that he did not demand conformity with his own views. He was clearly impressed by a demanding intellectual standard, by the requirement that the students study important books, and that the teachers take the books and the students very seriously. The fact was that Hutchins had no hand in the construction of the survey courses and he did not attempt to take one.

I looked through the syllabuses of the survey courses in the humanities; there was much of Greek literature and philosophy but practically nothing medieval. So much for the outsider's view of the University of Chicago being a place where "Jewish professors teach Roman Catholicism to Protestant students!" So much, too, for the prejudices of Hutchins's opponents within the University itself!

The general drift of Hutchins's attitude toward the College was to encourage teachers who wished their students to read the best literature in their fields and the classical texts rather than secondary works. It encouraged those teachers who wished to work over a broad range and who did not, at least for the time being, wish to teach and do research on very specialized subjects. Hutchins's policy did not say anything about how the texts should be interpreted, although some of his more zealous followers did. The result in general was an atmosphere of extraordinary exhilaration among students and teachers in the undergraduate courses of the first two years of the University. Plato and Aristotle were obviously much better authors to read than Ernest Barker and George Sabine about Plato and Aristotle; it was better to read Locke and Hobbes than some secondary source. The students responded to this mode of teaching, if not with wise understanding, then with the enthusiasm which comes from the sense of doing something of intrinsic importance. It aroused great interest among them and caused them to extend their mental powers.

The impression remains in my mind that part of the high enthusiasm and the strong convictions of the teachers and the students of the College of the 1930s of the importance of what they were engaged in came from Hutchins's presence and patronage. His public statements repeatedly referred to the College as a vital undertaking. The members of the College staff and the student body were the beneficiaries. Of course, intelligent and intellectually responsive students, well-educated and eager teachers, and very good syllabuses would have aroused enthusiasm and given intense pleasure even under the patronage and presence of a less impressive president. But the auspices of such a famous and scintillating general only added to the pride and delight of the soldiers who served under him.

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Apart from the first years of the undergraduate course of studies, the real university was not directly discussed by either side of the great debate at the University of Chicago. The real university was the University of Chicago which had become famous in the first four decades of its existence as the university where Michelson, Millikan, Loeb, Sapir, Bloomfield, Buck, Freund, Breasted, Nitze, Keniston, Craigie, Manley, Rickert, Sherburn, Archer Taylor, Park, Thomas, Knight, Viner, Douglas, Bliss, and the Wright Brothers (Sewall and Quincy) worked. Before the great debate began early in the 1930s, the University of Chicago was a university dead in earnest about learning and discovery. It was the leading graduate school in the country in a very large number of fields. Aside from the regrouping of the departments into four major divisions, Hutchins did not speak about major modifications in the dominant part of the University—the graduate student body outnumbered the undergraduates by two- to three-fold. Research and teaching went on unaffected by President Hutchins's reforming ideas or by Mortimer Adler's flirtations with Thomism.

In the social sciences, the two scholars who were most sympathetic with Hutchins were Robert Redfield, the anthropologist, and John Nef, the economic historian. Both were distinguished scholars, but neither gained in his scholarly work from the Hutchins program for the reconstruction of academic life. John Nef was indeed much affected by Hutchins's ideas at the beginning of the 1940s and, as a result, his outstanding run of scholarly publications was gradually supplanted by social philosophy; his achievements in social philosophy were far from the excellence of his achievements as an economic historian, which showed considerable originality and a remarkable breadth of culture. Although Robert Redfield was an admirer and friend of Hutchins, his anthropological work was influenced far more by his father-in-law, Robert Park, the great sociologist. Hutchins's ideas about the kind of scholarship which should be furthered was encouraging to those with broad interests.

Until the appointment of Leo Strauss—late in Hutchins's administration—there were no other social scientists who were in one way or another close to Hutchins's position. Strauss was all for "great books" in political philosophy, and he was also devoted to St. John's College in Annapolis, where Adler's and Hutchins's more restricted program for undergraduate education was in force. But he had his own ideas about the interpretation of texts. The Committee on Social Thought, which was in the division of the social science, had a number of members who admired Hutchins and who thought that he was on the right side in the battle against specialization and the methods of empirical science. The Committee generally was also close to the Hutchins position in the stress

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which it laid on the intensive study of works of major importance. But the very freedom which Hutchins provided for it meant that it did not run strictly along the lines which seemed to be indicated by his programmatic statements. It certainly had nothing to do with Adler's schemes, which were much more differentiated and specific than Hutchins's own rather general appreciation of the study of fundamental intellectual works. It should also be said that the Committee on Social Thought would never have existed without Hutchins. It was a child of his pessimism about reforming the University of Chicago in the pattern which he adapted with Adler's guidance and of his occasional and despairing toying with the idea of going off and starting something completely new.

The division of the social sciences bore a few negative marks of Hutchins's influence. The department of political science in particular was affected by him. Harold Gosnell and Harold Lasswell, both pioneers in their subjects, could not gain promotion to professorships in the University and they departed. Anthropology and economics went on in their own way, both on a very high standard, but this was because the members of those departments cared about them; I think Hutchins never intruded into their affairs.

Hutchins took no interest in sociology which was at the height of its fame when he came to the University, though he undoubtedly did not like it. He was contemptuous of statistical research in which the department of sociology was strong and in which he had begun to be interested when he was at Yale. He surely did not like Louis Wirth, since Wirth had made himself into one of the most acerbic of the critics of the new regime, as he understood it. The standing of the department of sociology at Chicago certainly did decline during Hutchins's administration, but I do not think that this was a result of Hutchins's attitude. He must have thought that the subject was hopeless, yet, even if he had thought otherwise, I doubt that he could have stayed the decline. When the department—or at least Louis Wirth—would have appointed Karl Mannheim after his dismissal by the Nazis, Hutchins discouraged it. It is difficult to imagine what might have been the result of Mannheim's transplantation to Chicago in 1933 rather than to the London School of Economics.

Hutchins took a more active hand in furthering the attrition of the tradition established in political science by Charles Merriam. Although Merriam had been a supporter of Hutchins's appointment to the presidency and continued to support him in many important matters, and even though Hutchins seems to have liked Merriam personally, Hutchins disapproved thoroughly of Merriam's empirical conception of political science. The result was the departure from the University of two of Merriam's most prized young men.

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Hutchins's most important positive accomplishment in connection with the department of political science was his support for the appointment of Leo Strauss from three proposed candidates—the other two were Alessandro d'Entreves and Alfred Cobban. This showed Hutchins at his best; the other two candidates were good scholars and they were strongly recommended by John Nef, with whom Hutchins was very friendly. Nonetheless, when I as executive secretary of the Committee on Social Thought put the case for Strauss before him in the summer of 1949, he forcefully agreed that Strauss was obviously the strongest candidate. (He also agreed during that summer to the appointment of Michael Polanyi to the Committee on Social Thought under similar conditions.) Strauss had much to recommend him to Hutchins. He was a very distinguished student of "great books"; he disliked the modern world and thought that it had gone astray as a result of its departure from the tenets of classical political philosophy; he was also a German; and in 1949 Hutchins was much more appreciative of German scholarship than he had been in the 1930s. Still, whatever the grounds, Hutchins inclined toward the right man both with respect to his outstanding intellectual merits and his partial congeniality with Hutchins's ideas of what a university should be. Through the appointment of Strauss, the University of Chicago developed into a major center for the study of the classical tradition of political philosophy. The appointment of Leo Strauss was an act in the same direction as his initiative in creating the Committee on Social Thought and his continued support of it. It was of a piece with his dislike of the specialization of research in science.

Hutchins's relations with the physical and biological sciences were paradoxical. For all sorts of reasons, he did not like these subjects. He disliked specialization as much as anything in the world of learning; he was also against science because it praised methodical empirical observation and seemed to deny the autonomy of rational speculative philosophy and its metaphysical foundations. I think too that, although Hutchins had no religious beliefs, he was opposed to modern science, which was alleged to have discredited the foundations of religious faith; I think that he also associated science with technology and the active pursuit of wealth, both of which he disliked, although ambivalently.

The scientists reciprocated Hutchins's views for a variety of their own reasons. They were dead set against Hutchins and his schemes. They were very much against his desire to concentrate the first two years of undergraduate study on obligatory survey courses. They wanted the undergraduates to move into their special or major subjects before reaching the third year; the chemists were especially disturbed by Hutchins's disapproval of specialized studies in the first two years of the students' careers in the University. They and the other scientists were

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alarmed by his belief in the necessity of a foundation of knowledge in metaphysics, much in the way in which Gideonse, Wirth, and Knight were. But, in my recollection, the only scientist who joined in public the attack on Hutchins and his friends was Anton Carlson. The scientists provided much of the opposition to Hutchins's programs; they did so quietly and for good reasons and poor ones. They, too, were affected by the Thomist penumbra which Adler contributed to the image of Hutchins at the University of Chicago.

The scientists were not brawlers. They stayed out of the public eye and looked after their own affairs. Certain departments declined in the 1930s, and the University of Chicago ceased to be preeminent in various fields in which it had led in the preceding decades. Nonetheless, many distinguished appointments were made in the 1930s in the division of the physical sciences, and they did not have to be forced on Hutchins. On the contrary, he was usually very forthcoming: Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar in astrophysics, Saunders MacLane and Marshall Stone in mathematics, and others were appointed before or just after the war. After the Second World War, the appointments of Antoni Zygmund, André Weil, Enrico Fermi, James Franck, and Harold Urey maintained in some fields, and restored in others, the reputation of the University of Chicago.

Much of the recovery of the position of the University of Chicago after 1945 came about through the presence on the campus during the war of the Metallurgy Project, as the work on atomic research was officially called. Urey, Fermi, and Franck came to Chicago that way. For the last six or seven years of Hutchins's administration, the University of Chicago returned to its old eminence in certain of the natural sciences. This was another of the numerous paradoxes of Hutchins's career. Those branches of learning with which he was least congenial prospered most; the paradox was accentuated in the physical sciences because the renewed eminence of the University in those fields came about through the Metallurgy Project. Hutchins had been for a short time associated with the American First Committee before the entry of the United States into the Second World War. Yet his University prospered in the fields he liked least through its share in the production of a decisive weapon for use in a war which he had opposed.

There was also irony in the changes in the division of the humanities at the University of Chicago during Hutchins's time there. I do not know what his attitude toward or knowledge of these subjects was while he was at Yale. Indeed, I gathered from Mr. Ashmore's account that, as a student at Oberlin and at Yale, Hutchins seems to have had no great intellectual interests in any academic subject, although he gained the highest marks. (Law seems to have been the only field of study that

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aroused his interest.) After he came to Chicago, the humanities appeared to be the first candidate for his affections. There was such an affinity between them and the program of the study of "great books" to which he was devoted. Nevertheless, it did not at all turn out that way. He allowed the humanities division to decay at Chicago, without attempting to replace it by another type of division pursuing humanistic studies in a manner closer to his heart.

The department of classics should have thrived under Hutchins's jurisdiction, but it did not. Classical studies have for many decades had a hard time in the United States because Latin and Greek have retreated so steadily from the secondary schools and also because classical scholars have stuck so fast to the traditional philological mode. Nonetheless, when Hutchins settled into the presidency of Chicago and began to espouse the superiority of the ancients to the moderns, it would have been reasonable to predict that he would treat the department of classics with special indulgence. He did not. He was indifferent to it. Werner Jaeger came to the department for a short stay but then went on to Harvard. For a time in the 1930s, as a result of the Nazi dismissal of Jewish university teachers, the world was flooded with outstanding classical scholars. Hutchins, as far as I know, had no desire to take advantage of these misfortunes on behalf of the classics department. Even at the beginning of the German exodus, when I was new at the University, I was struck by the failure of the University of Chicago to draw on the supply of accomplished scholars whom the Nazis had made available to the universities of the Western world. The Oriental Institute, which had already had very close connections with Germany from the very beginning of James Breasted's career, was, I think, the only part of the University of Chicago that sought to retrieve what benefits were available from the catastrophe which befell the learned world of Germany. It benefited greatly from the appointment of such Jewish refugee scholars as Leo Oppenheim and Benno Landsberger.

The departments of modern languages suffered like most of the other humanistic subjects. Of course, it is difficult in the United States for a department of Germanic languages and literature to be as good as an outstanding department in a German university or for a department of French or Italian to match the work of an outstanding group in a French or Italian university. But the fact remains that those departments at Chicago declined from their earlier American eminence and showed no signs of revival until Hutchins's brief Germanophile phase towards and after the end of the war. The French department, when I came to the University, was one of the most respected in the country, but by the time of Hutchins's departure, it had sunk to second rank. Oriental studies other than the study of the ancient Middle East lay inert; modern European history was the same.

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The English department with Manley and Rickert, Sherburn and Crane had been an outstanding center of meticulous editorial, historical, and bibliographical scholarship—what in Germany had been called *Philologie*—and it continued with slight diminution in these parts of the field as its attention shifted toward a theory of criticism based on the study of Aristotle. The "Chicago critics" became one of the few points of eminence in the humanities division. This did not seem to me to be a very fruitful development but it was nevertheless considered a very respectable intellectual achievement. It was the only one in the division of the humanities which had some affinity with Hutchins's own preferences; it was to a large extent the result of the influence of Richard McKeon who had been brought to Chicago through Adler's intercession.

The department of philosophy had not been to Hutchins's taste when he came to Chicago, although its outlook would have been consistent with that of his few years at the Yale Law School. Perhaps his experience in attempting unsuccessfully to change it in the direction sought by Mortimer Adler was the cause of his later reluctance to become engaged in conflicts with the well-established departments of the University. Yet this policy was inconsistently followed. On rare occasions, he took an active hand in an appointment, as in the case of Leo Strauss; sometimes but not often he blocked an appointment or promotion on which he felt strongly, though more often he did not interfere when a proposal for the appointment of a mediocrity came before him. But even this pattern was not consistently adhered to. The philosophical outlook of Rudolf Carnap must have been as abhorrent to him as anything in the intellectual world of the twentieth century. Yet the appointment of Carnap to the department toward which Hutchins originally had the most covetous intentions requires explanation. Perhaps the explanation lies in his usually exigent sense of quality. He might well have seen that Carnap was the most distinguished philosopher of his kind, even though the kind was distasteful to him. His appreciation of Frank Knight was perhaps like this; he admired Knight's passionate intellectual honesty and great acuity and he was not deterred from this by Knight's often abusive public treatment of Hutchins's own views and policies. I think that he also had a genuine affection for Knight who, though often trying to many who knew him, was a most endearing, as well as a curmudgeonly sagacious man and an intellect both searching and profound.

The one part of the University of Chicago Hutchins must have taken unqualified satisfaction in was the Law School. It dealt with the one field of academic life with which he had substantial experience and where his intellectual discrimination did not encounter any resistance from his espousal of "principles." He came to the Law School when it was already very good, and when he left it, it was in the first rank of law

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schools in the country. He felt at ease with the Law School and he had strong admirers there. His appointment of Edward Levi as dean at an early age, against resistance from some trustees because Levi was Jewish, was perhaps the most notable appointment he made during his presidency. Levi later became provost and then president of the University, and under his care the University of Chicago regained much of the ground it had lost over three decades.

Hutchins left important marks on the University of Chicago, and he generated an atmosphere of intellectual passion in the University which was unique in my experience of universities in the United States and elsewhere. Some of this intellectual excitement came from the stimulus of the conflicts within the University. A spirit of divisiveness was fostered; it was exhilarating to its participants and, because it seemed to involve "principles" and was nominally about education, it made a better impression on its participants than it deserved while it misled outside observers. Frank Knight, the sadly cynical idealist, once formulated an adaptation of Gresham's law about money which he called "Knight's law." "Knight's law" asserted that "bad talk drives out good talk." "Knight's law" certainly was in operation at the University of Chicago in the more than twenty years of Hutchins's presidency. The divisions within the teaching staff and to some extent in the student body were partly divisions about serious educational matters, particularly about the amount of liberal education and the amount of specialized education that ought to be contained in the undergraduate curriculum. This was a genuine issue. It was overlaid and obscured by the spurious issues of Aristotelian and Thomistic philosophy versus secularism, "intellectualism" versus pragmatism, and "great books" versus textbooks. Before long the spurious issues crowded out the genuine issues.

Whoever has written about the University of Chicago during the era of Robert Hutchins's presidency—toward the end his title was changed to chancellor—was impressed by the intensity of the intellectual tone there. Since all this was about the superiority of the ancients to the moderns, it was taken to be ipso facto intellectual, but much of it was unjustifiable anger and sheer animal spirits. Nonetheless, the University of Chicago was actually a place of great seriousness and animation, and much of this serious animation was about the interpretation of Greek plays, Aristotle's *Ethics*, Plato's *Republic*, and similar works. All undergraduates had to study classical texts in English translation, of course; many, though, were stimulated to learn Greek, and there were many teachers with genuine intellectual zeal about what they were doing. They read deeply and widely; most of them wrote very little and spent much time in discussion with students and one another. In many

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students, the outcome was genuine reverence for philosophical discourse and learning, and to this day many look back to those years as the best of their lives. This was an important part of Hutchins's achievement.

As far as the intensity of the intellectual experience is concerned, it must be said that the University of Chicago practically from its beginning in the 1890s had conducted its affairs with a serious—some would say grim, others gloomy—conviction of the supreme importance of scientific and scholarly learning. Most of the teachers were deeply devoted to teaching and most of the students, both undergraduate and graduate, were devoted to learning. Those who recall the University of Chicago of the 1920s, or who like me came upon traces of it in the 1930s, testify to the vigor and gravity with which ideas were pondered there. They were, however, ideas which arose out of or in connection with scientific and scholarly research; and "idle speculation" was not well looked upon. The new excitation brought about by the presence of Robert Hutchins was something different: in its subject matter, its rhetoric, its intentions.

Of course, the teachers of the University of Chicago continued to be passionately interested in their research, and they continued to discuss as they had discussed. The novelty of the discussions which followed on the installation of Hutchins was that the disputes were mainly about the right organization of higher education, about the best syllabus, and to some extent, about a relatively small number of great authors. The discussion of the ideas of Plato and Aristotle was often about their ideas, but it was also often carried on as a challenge to the ancien régime of the University of Chicago; and it was taken to be such by those who thought they were being challenged. It was at least in part the thrill of combat and not just the stirring experience of ideas. Much of the public combat was made up of deformation and simplifications of serious ideas—both the "Hutchins-party" and its antagonists were very productive of such substitutes for honest thought. Hutchins's scouts, Adler and the publicist Milton Mayer, aggravated the situation. The former did so by his schematic, ostensibly rigorous, syllogistic mode of presentation, which proceeded with apparent logical necessity from postulates that were alien to the outlook and idiom of his interlocutors and above all by his dogmatic and often angry tone of voice; Milton Mayer, an ignorant and sentimental zealot who combined cynicism and naïveté, put off the opponents of Hutchins by his fluent flippancy. The other side was no better. Frank Knight, who was the most distinguished of Hutchins's opponents by his own intellectual attainments and by his earnestness, was a querulous, cranky debater who would fasten on a point and not let it go; he was, moreover, often injurious to those with whom he disagreed and was equally quick to take offense. In fact, one of the most impressive

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things about Robert Hutchins was his amused and patient affection for Frank Knight.

As the years passed, a spirit of acrimony developed within the University of Chicago, which went from bad to worse. Sentiments hardened. It came to a deadlock when, during the war, Hutchins attempted to institute constitutionally a plebiscitary device that would have given him the powers of the great university presidents of the period before 1914—before the growth of departmental autonomy and of the more widespread participation by the teaching staff in university government that has now become quite common. Hutchins's proposal was defeated in the university senate—consisting then only of full professors—by a large majority. The matter stood at a stalemate until a trustee, the wise lawyer Laird Bell, put forward a scheme which was then accepted by the board of trustees and from which neither Hutchins nor the committee of the senate demurred.

Mr. Ashmore tells of the generally forgotten episode of Hutchins's proposal to abolish ranks in the faculties of the University and to introduce the "4-E contract" whereby salaries would be increased and all earnings of teachers from services outside the University would be turned over to the University. Nothing came of these efforts to make the University into a community, solidary and equal, of learned men and women, wholly concentrated on the pursuit and transmission of truth. The proposal did nothing more than stir up a small commotion. It was really no more than an incidental and awkward manifestation of Hutchins's desire to create an intellectual community, pervaded by mutual understanding and ruled by an undistracted search for truth through dialogue.

The extraordinary intensity of discussion at the University of Chicago belied the accusations directed against Hutchins by some of his adversaries within the University and by some of his critics outside it. One of the most common charges was that his philosophical outlook implied a single correct answer to every question and that if he had his way he would establish a reigning and compulsory dogma, based on Aristotelian metaphysics. Nothing could have been further from the truth. His critics were vituperative, but with rare exception he never did anything to obstruct their academic careers within the University of Chicago.

Hutchins not only accepted criticism from the members of the faculty without recrimination, he also supported them when they ran into heavy weather outside the University as a consequence of their rightly or wrongly attributed support for Communist causes. One fellow traveler whom I knew quite well, Frederick L. Schuman, then an assistant professor of political science, was subjected to inquiry by an investigative committee of the state legislature of Illinois. Schuman was incon-

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testably a fellow traveler. He told me that, when he received a summons to appear before the committee, he was invited by Hutchins to visit him in his office. Hutchins told him that when he appeared before the inquisitors, he should not deny what he had said but should emphasize that he had said it according to his best judgment, on the basis of his studies of the subject and after due reflection, and that if he did so he could count with certainty on the support of Hutchins, the chairman of his department, and the University board of trustees. I do not think that there were many—if indeed any—other university presidents in the United States who, in the decades when legislators and publicists were harassing Communists and fellow travelers and decent persons wrongly accused of subversive intentions, came to the support of their teaching staff in this admirably courageous way.

It was under Robert Hutchins, too, that black scholars were appointed to the University of Chicago; I think here particularly of Alison Davis and Abram Harris. This was long before affirmative action was conceived.

When Hutchins resigned in 1952 there was a sense of bereavement in the University of Chicago. For more than two decades his handsome presence, his wit, his national reputation had filled the University and preoccupied its minds more than was good for any institution. Now that he was gone, the place seemed empty. With his departure came also the awareness that the University of Chicago was no longer what it had been. After all the delight of debate about genuine and spurious issues, the members of the University of Chicago became aware that its preeminence had subsided. Other universities had got ahead of it. Harvard and the University of California at Berkeley, the University of Michigan and Stanford University had moved up in the years after the end of the Second World War. The University of Chicago ceased to be intellectually as attractive as it had been. Other universities were in a better position. Some had more money, others were located in more pleasant places, others had more social prestige. Outstanding figures of the University of Chicago accepted appointments elsewhere, the retirement or death of outstanding teachers was followed by the appointment of less outstanding ones.

Whereas, before the war, the University of Chicago had been on the same level as Harvard and the University of California at Berkeley, the situation had changed. Harvard was very much richer, it was in a more pleasant place, and it also had more prestige. It also began to appoint members of the "new class" of outstanding Jewish academics, which it had probably been less ready to accept before the outbreak of the Second World War; the University of California at Berkeley had been an

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outstanding university for a long time, and, as a state university in an expanding and prosperous state close to the brilliant city of San Francisco and enjoying a far more attractive natural environment than Chicago, also pressed forward. As a result of this ascent of this handful of other universities, the University of Chicago which, with, for a time, Johns Hopkins University and for a shorter time, Clark University, had shown the way to the country, yielded its position as a foremost institution of scientific and scholarly education and research.

This decline occurred during Hutchins's administration and he was not unaware of it. Ashmore quotes an address to the annual dinner given by the trustees to the teaching staff in which Hutchins spoke of the need to restore the departments to "their pre-depression distinction." He said this as early as 1935. The process continued throughout the 1930s and 1940s. To what extent Hutchins was responsible for this general decline is difficult to say.

Mr. Ashmore brings out very clearly the strong Calvinist strain in Hutchins. The idealistic hopeful Protestantism of his forebears, their austerity and piety, lived on in Hutchins throughout his life. He was a pious agnostic; he had ceased to be a Christian when he was a young man, but the moral strain of his ancestral Christianity never left him. He believed in natural law without a deity; he believed natural law could be grasped through reason.

Hutchins was above all a man of principles. He believed that the acquisition of fundamental principles was the right end of university education and research. He did not think that scientific research could attain such principles; he did not think that traditional humanistic research could attain them. Erudition did not satisfy him, scientific truth did not satisfy him. He was convinced that these principles could be found in metaphysics. This is what he learned from Mortimer Adler. He believed that, through "dialogue," clarity could be attained and persuasion achieved. Methodical research, historical research, the scholarly editing of texts, the writing of biographies, sociological studies, ethnology—all these activities of the natural and social sciences and of the humanistic disciplines were not activities which greatly interested Hutchins. Of course, he never directly said this, because that would have entailed the abolition of universities of the type which had developed from the German university of the nineteenth century. Nonetheless, I think that this is what he really thought about science and learning.

Hutchins did not disapprove of all scholars and scientists. He admired R. H. Tawney, but it was the social philosopher in Tawney rather than the historian he admired. He liked John Nef, but not so much the learned historian of the British coal industry and of the relations between government and industry in France and England in the six-

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teenth and seventeenth centuries as the aspiring reformer of historical writing who sought to foster the ideas of love and beauty through historical work. He liked many more scholars and scientists than he intellectually approved of. He liked brilliant persons, profound persons, clever persons, fluent persons, learned persons, persons of eminence, and persons who spoke rapidly and, if they happened to be scholars or scientists, that was all right too.

No wonder, then, that despite the brilliance of the Hutchins era in Chicago, the University of Chicago slipped somewhat during this period. That it did not do so more is evidence of the deep vitality of a great institution and of the fact that Hutchins was a better man and a more faithful servant of his institution than his principles would have led him to be.

Hutchins had little reverence for the traditions of institutions; he also had even less sense for the setting of institutions. This was another reason why the University of Chicago slipped in the time of his presidency. The local setting of the University of Chicago was changing throughout the 1930s and 1940s, but Hutchins did not wish to try to cope with the situation.

When I first came to Hyde Park, the district in Chicago where the University is located, in the first half of the 1930s, it was a very seemly district, not at all very pleasing to the eye but sober and well kept. Most of the residential buildings were dismally ugly, but they were well looked after. The districts immediately to the south were respectable lower-middle-class and working-class residential areas. Likewise to the north, where there were several large buildings, some like tenements, in which bohemian graduate students lived. To the east, between the campus and Jackson Park, there was an area of respectable apartment buildings and single-family residences. German Jews, many of them refugees from the Nazis, some of earlier arrival, were settled there. On the west, there was beautiful Washington Park, which separated the university area from the "Black Belt," as it was then called. Toward the end of the 1930s, signs of deterioration began to appear just at the corners of 55th Street, where there were continuous rows of small shops on both sides of the street for more than a mile: grocery shops, delicatessens, butcher shops, bakeries, upholsterers, small restaurants, dry goods shops, ladies' dress shops. There was an inexpensive cinema which played the excellent films of the 1930s. Above the shops were poorer residences. The decay began to show itself at first toward the east and west ends of 55th Street where there were intersections of trolley-car lines. I recall noticing in the "spot-maps," which were so cultivated by Chicago sociologists of that generation, that the spots representing

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the residences of those charged by the police with delinquent and criminal actions were becoming dense at each end of 55th Street. When I once mentioned this to Louis Wirth, he replied angrily that I was a Fascist. By that he meant that I was criticizing the Negroes and the poor. Of course, that was preposterous. It was clear then that the deterioration of the district was beginning.

When I came back in the middle of the 1940s to the University after an absence of several years, I saw that the deterioration had gone much further. Except for those residences, very close to the center of the campus, into which Japanese-American families, released from detention camps, had moved, gardens had gone to weeds, houses were unpainted, there were obvious signs of dilapidation encircling the immediate area of the University.

Not that Hutchins either fostered this delapidation or could have avoided it or turned it back. But I had the distinct impression that he was indifferent to it. Each summer, on my return from London, I used to call on him to give him my unsolicited assessment of the state of the University. He was always very kind; I suppose that my observations must have amused him. He used to listen to me with his remarkably sweet smile. On the occasion of my visit in the summer of 1949, I said to him that the University was in danger because the physical deterioration and social disorder of an already not very beautiful district, along with the competition from Harvard and California, were causing some of our best teachers to leave and making it more difficult to persuade outstandingly promising younger teachers to accept appointments at the University. With characteristically charming and witty condescension, he replied, "You are wrong. Don't you know that the greatness of the University of Chicago has always rested on the fact that Chicago is so boring that our professors do not have anything else to do except to work?" It may be that he felt differently, but I never had any indication that he thought that there was anything in what I said.

I have also heard it said that the University of Chicago was in poor financial condition in the last years of Hutchins's presidency, and that this was a result of his failure to win the support of the wealthy. I cannot give any opinion about this except to say that the position of the University of Chicago among the leading private universities of the country has always been difficult because of the economic origins and professional destinations of its students. We have not traditionally had students who come from wealthy families, and our graduates normally enter the learned professions and academic life rather than business. We have a very faithful and appreciative alumni who contribute generously to the University, but for the most part they do not include very wealthy persons. I do not know whether Hutchins could have done better than he did in this realm.

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After he left the University of Chicago, Robert Hutchins seemed to be a prince in exile. I am not sure that it wasn't that way from the very beginning. I think that at first he was glad to get the burden of the University off his shoulders, and he was happy, as an associate director of the Ford Foundation, to be in a position to act generously in support of civil liberties and public education. As always, he was forthright, trenchant, and courageous. But the fidelity to friends and his courage in resolutely refusing to dissemble his beliefs, which had done harm to his position at the University of Chicago, and then at the Fund for the Republic, and finally at the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions, afflicted him at the Ford Foundation, too. Mr. Ashmore offers a detailed and impartial account of these years. It is an account of a giant among pygmies, most of whom he himself had chosen.

Robert Hutchins sometimes impressed one as a man of extraordinary shrewdness in estimating the qualities of individual human beings. His judgments were always succinct, sharply formulated, and seemed to touch on some very significant characteristics. He had an exceptional sense of intellectual quality. Yet in his own life that is where he seemed sometimes to go furthest astray and did himself the most damage. Putting aside for the moment the perhaps fatal step that he took in his early years at the University of Chicago in allowing Mortimer Adler to appear to present his views, and leaving aside, too, any question of Mortimer Adler's merits as a philosopher, I have no doubt that it did great damage to Robert Hutchins's effectiveness as president to have Mortimer Adler so closely associated with him. Hutchins's loyalty to Adler might be evidence of the virtue of fidelity; it certainly bespeaks courage in the face of harsh criticism. Nonetheless, the association was so close, at least in the minds of so many members of the University, that Hutchins's attitude was taken to be identical with what Adler said. Adler was so rude to those who disagreed with him and he always seemed so angry and so derogatory toward so many individuals and activities in the University that the antagonism which he aroused was extended to Hutchins and damaged him badly.

This account of Robert Hutchins's career at the University of Chicago does not sufficiently evoke the effect of his strikingly lofty visage, his sovereign bearing, and the economy of his spoken and written expression. It scarcely indicates his courtesy and his cool affections, or his sardonic and disarming self-depreciation. These were all qualities he had in wonderful abundance. There is much about Robert Hutchins that I do not know. Although he was also one of the most pleasing men to be with whom I can recall, I was never intimate with him. Even those who were closer to him than I came up against his impenetrable reserve. It could not have been otherwise, given the puritanism and moral rigorism

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which he had inherited from his ancestors. Mr. Ashmore's story of Hutchins's life reveals this unmistakably.

Yet somehow things did not work out as Robert Hutchins wished, and as those who loved and admired him wished. No good accomplishments endure forever and most careers end up in annulment. In Hutchins's case, the failure was more than was necessary in view of his great merits. And not all of the failure is simply to be attributed to the accidents of external fortune. They grew from two flaws, one a flaw of intellect, the other a flaw of judgment. The flaw of intellect was that he believed that the truths which should guide mankind are capable of general and exact formulation. Hutchins was a man of principle; he believed that principles could be promulgated and that once learned they could serve as direct and unambiguous guides to conduct. He had no patience for the principles which lie unarticulated and embodied in the traditions of institutions and individual experience. He believed that principles could be discovered by ratiocination, that they must be clear and simple, and that clarity and simplicity were sufficient for the guidance of individuals and their societies through the rough course of human existence. This itself was contradictory to the tinge of cynicism in his sardonic world-weariness and in his own often remarkable artfulness as an administrator.

Was this a result of a utopian idealism? Whatever it was, it led Hutchins to keep bad company—the bad company of false idealists, doctrinaires, formulaic reformers, intellectual mediocrities, and intellectual bullies on whose behalf he used his failing physical strength in the last decade of his life to save the Center for the Study of Democratic Institutions in Santa Barbara. This combination of excessively clear ideals, an excessive confidence in ratiocination, an irrepressible honesty, and an unquestioning loyalty to those undeserving of it undid him. But not entirely. For all his flaws, Robert Hutchins was one of the greatest university presidents of the present century. He was a good citizen and a patriot who cared for the well-being of the human race. He was a man of honor and he tried to live up to his convictions, which he never hid.

This is how the career of this glittering, entirely extraordinary man appears to me and that is why I am so sad in contemplating it.

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On Watch

HARRY WALSH

Some watches at sea
I was so alert
I could see things before they appeared.
Sensing pending arrivals
I would watch a point
on the horizon
until certainly a mast was there,
a needle point of light,
or dawn.
Once I stared at a spot
on the surface of the ocean
beneath which I knew
a whale waited.
I have watched stars
by concentrating on an empty
and dark place in the night.
Watched doors, windows
and miles
waiting for someone
invisible always
but for the turbulence of their passing.

✪ HARRY WALSH worked for ten years on oceangoing tugboats from the port of New York and has been a professional fisherman.

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I Think; Therefore I Thank

A Philosophy of Etiquette

JUDITH MARTIN and GUNTHER S. STENT

CONTEMPORARY PHILOSOPHERS are largely innocent of etiquette. Philosophical interest in the extra-legal governance of social conduct flourished from classical antiquity through the Renaissance to the nineteenth century, from Socrates through Erasmus to Emerson. Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism share the view that etiquette is inseparable from morality. Yet twentieth-century Western philosophers pay scant attention to manners. Just how carelessly and contemptuously contemporary philosophers regard the ancient subject of etiquette became obvious in one of the few discussions in the modern philosophical literature in which the subject is even mentioned. This fracas was set off in 1972 by Philippa Foot's essay "Morality as a System of Hypothetical Imperatives," in which uninformed allegations about etiquette provided one of the main premises of her argument. Although Mrs. Foot did not trouble to justify the validity of these allegations, even critics who disagreed with her main conclusions did not challenge her premise. We begin by examining that fracas, to illustrate the difficulties that this intellectual blind spot creates for those attempting to fathom the moral aspects of social behavior.

Mrs. Foot's main concern was not etiquette, but the ontological question "Why should I be moral?" She challenged Immanuel Kant's distinction between a categorical and a hypothetical imperative. The former commands an action as of itself rationally necessary, without regard to any other end, and which can be willed as univeral law (you ought to do y), while the latter commands an action as necessary only as a means to something else (if you want x, you should do y). Her objective was to demolish the widely accepted view that moral judgments are

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categorical imperatives because they tell us what we have to do regardless of our interests or desires and have an "automatic reason-giving force" making special reasons for compliance unnecessary. Imperatives of morality, she wished to show, are not logically distinguishable from hypothetical imperatives.

To develop her argument, Mrs. Foot compared the imperatives of morality with those of etiquette, characterizing the latter as "silly rules" and regarding them, by way of a self-evident truth not in need of argumentative support, as wholly outside the moral realm. An imperative of etiquette, such as "An invitation in the third person ought to be answered in the third person" takes the same unconditional form as an imperative of morality, she pointed out. But, according to her, "no one attributes the special dignity and necessity" to this imperative of etiquette or considers it to be of the categorical kind, even though it "does not fail to apply to someone who has his own good reasons for ignoring this piece of nonsense," or who simply does not care whether or not he is polite. "Considerations of etiquette do not have any automatic reason-giving force," Mrs. Foot stated categorically," and a man might be right if he denied that he had reason to do 'what's done.' " In other words, despite their apparent claim to unrestricted validity, the imperatives of etiquette require justification, and hence are of the hypothetical, rather than categorical, kind.

Mrs. Foot then inferred from the formal resemblance between the imperatives of morality and of etiquette that the former have no better claim to the status of categorical imperatives than the latter. She declared that, contrary to the Kantian view, it is no more irrational to ignore the ought of morality (to say, "Immoral—so what?"), than it is to ignore the ought of etiquette (to say, "Not *comme il faut*—so what?"), although it might be more imprudent, since morality is more strictly enforced than etiquette. Mrs. Foot's conclusion, once again, was that morality is a system of hypothetical, rather than categorical, imperatives.

Mrs. Foot's essay provoked a set of critical responses intent on saving the categorical status of moral imperatives. None of them defended etiquette. No one seized on her unsubstantiated categorization of etiquette as a system of hypothetical—not to mention silly—imperatives, in order to demolish her argument that moral imperatives have only hypothetical status because their form is similar to that of etiquette.

One of Mrs. Foot's respondents, William K. Frankena, considered her assigning hypothetical status to moral imperatives tantamount to an attack on morality itself. He conceded that moral oughts have an automatic reason-giving force only for agents subscribing to the "moral point of view," which is something each person "can decide for himself." Yet he asserted that the option of not subscribing to the moral point

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of view does not entail moral oughts being hypothetical (as Mrs. Foot would have it). Instead they are "non-hypothetical" (a term introduced by Mrs. Foot herself, much to her later regret), simply because "a man's life is better, even from an overall non-moral point of view, if it is not only good and right from the moral point of view but is lived by him under the aspect of morality. One would, I am convinced, choose this life, other things being equal, if one were fully rational . . . and knew what such a life was like." Thus, contrary to Mrs. Foot but in accord with Kant, it *would* be irrational to say "immoral—so what?" Mr. Frankena did not seem to be bothered by according non-hypothetical status to the oughts of etiquette as well, or by having a rational person choose also a polite life if he knew what such a life was like.

Mrs. Foot replied: "What I want to hear of is a difference relevant to my particular problem about why we should think that judgments of etiquette are hypothetical imperatives while judgments of morality are not." Not having heard of such a difference from Mr. Frankena, Mrs. Foot found that people who hang on to the illusion that moral imperatives have automatic reason-giving force are on a par with writers of etiquette books, who, she believes, affect similarly unjustified categorical pretensions for grounding their edicts about what is "bad form" or "not done" and whom "we may suppose to be harmless, but can hardly hold . . . up as models of rationality."

In another critical response to Mrs. Foot's essay, D. Z. Phillips showed a more differentiated conception of etiquette. Etiquette, Mr. Phillips wrote, "may require more than Foot imagines," in that it shares with morality more than the unconditional form of their imperatives. Mr. Phillips had found that there are people who do have "a real concern for etiquette, for doing things properly" and hence follow its rules for their own sake, without regard to any other end such as the approval of others, just as moral persons follow the imperatives of morality for their own sake.

Mr. Phillips also recognized that morality and etiquette are not wholly separate systems for the governance of human comportment, since there are cases where they clearly overlap. For example, in greeting guests, "there may be a rule of etiquette . . . which stipulates when bowing or shaking hands is appropriate. Imagine a guest extending his hand when bowing is appropriate. In order not to upset him, the host joins in the handshake." Mr. Phillips clearly interpreted this example as meaning that the host violated a rule of etiquette for the sake of obeying the moral rule of not humiliating his guest. In fact, however, the handshaking host actually resolved a conflict *within* etiquette. Not humiliating others is as much an imperative of etiquette as it is of morality, and etiquette requires that its rules to that effect supersede its rules governing the ritual of greeting.

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Mr. Phillips also erred in claiming that the imperatives of morality are really, rather than merely formally, unconditional, in the sense that they cannot be put aside for the (according to him, dispensable) imperatives of etiquette. For instance, contrary to this claim, a well-mannered, albeit highly moral person may put aside the moral imperative demanding truth telling to obey the imperative of etiquette calling for hypocritical concealment of one's true derogatory opinion of others. Mr. Phillips's incorrect claim that in cases of conflict, moral oughts invariably overrule oughts of etiquette was not accidental but central to his case against Mrs. Foot: He asserted that this "difference may be marked by saying that the demands of morality are categorical while all other demands are hypothetical."

In her reply to Mr. Phillips, Mrs. Foot began to treat etiquette with more respect, and even seemed to leave open the possibility that it is a serious matter about which some persons feel deeply. This change in attitude allowed her to notice the flaw in Mr. Phillips's argument—namely, that counterexamples can be provided for his example of the shaking of the improperly proffered hand. One that she offered was the "distinct resistance to the idea that a host or hostess might refuse to serve any more drinks when the guests have had as much as is good for them given that they must drive home. In spite of the fact that they might kill or injure someone, which is surely a moral consideration, the host is not expected to close the bar and refuse to serve more alcohol as soon as this point has been reached." Thus, here "a rule of etiquette . . . operates on most people so strongly that it takes precedence over a rather weighty moral consideration. . . . It seems, therefore, that . . . the thesis that no one who cares about morality ever gives considerations of etiquette precedence over moral considerations (or that he feels remorse if he does so) is quite implausible." Hence Mr. Phillips's counterfactual allegation that morality invariably overrules etiquette cannot serve to establish the categorical status of moral imperatives.

Mrs. Foot stopped short of recognizing a substantive overlap between etiquette and morality, asserting that "it is clear for instance that the fact that something is contrary to the rules of etiquette is not itself supposed to be a moral consideration." She here revealed that she was not very familiar with the actual practice of etiquette as a system of normative rules for social conduct, since she thought that etiquette "is taught as a rigid set of rules that are on occasion to be broken. . . . We could have incorporated the exceptions into the rule of etiquette but we do not do so." (Here is one exception that "we" have incorporated into the ladies-first rule of gender precedence: A man precedes a woman down a flight of steps or out of a carriage—or a bus—to render her assistance in her descent.)

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It is true neither that, as Mrs. Foot asserted, some rules of etiquette "may be ignored in an emergency," nor that "we tend, in our teaching, to accommodate exceptions *within* morality." Rather, in many actual situations there arise conflicts between the rules within either system, which have to be resolved more or less ad hoc, usually by giving one rule precedence over another to render a wise (Solomonic) judgment. Indeed it would seem that etiquette is obliged to devote much more effort to adjudicating such conflicts than is morality, since most of the text of any etiquette book is (and most of the questions directed to etiquette columnists by their readers are) devoted not to spelling out the rules of etiquette, but to the wise resolution of the countless everyday conflicts that arise when attempting to apply the rules.

Finally, P. M. McGoldrick and E. F. Potter, in their joint response to Mrs. Foot, argued that there could be many silly rules, such as "Always write your name on the flyleaf of your book," that a person could, without rational contradiction, will to be universal law, which would obviously lack the automatic reason-giving force of categorical imperatives. For anointment of an imperative as a categorical, they put forward the additional requirement that its subcontrary could *not* be willed as universal law without rational contradiction. Since moral imperatives meet that condition, they are clearly of the categorical kind. But there is no rational contradiction in willing the subcontrary of the name-on-flyleaf rule (Never write your name on the flyleaf of your books) as universal law. So that rule clearly would not be of the categorical kind.

Since, following the early Mrs. Foot, Messrs. McGoldrick and Potter considered etiquette a set of silly rules, they concluded that its imperatives are similarly hypothetical and are, for that reason, fundamentally different from the imperatives of morality. One of the questions we will examine is whether it is actually the case that, as asserted without argument by Messrs. McGoldrick and Potter, the subcontrary of all rules of etiquette can be willed as universal law without rational contradiction.

It seems odd that, in view of Socrates' evergreen question "How should one live?" contemporary philosophers have shown so little interest in (and understanding of) etiquette. As heirs of the Greek founders of their discipline, they would be expected to remain concerned with the quest for the virtuous life, where "virtuous" refers to proper behavior in general, and not merely good moral conduct. This lack of interest is most regrettable, since etiquette, being a complex system of contextually dependent judgments rather than a simple matter of following rules (on occasion to be broken), is a subtle discipline on which much work remains to be done.

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Such work becomes crucial when a radically new social philosophy is installed, as was the case at the times of the American and French revolutions, when the rules of etiquette of the Court of St. James's and of the Ancien Régime were obviously inappropriate for their republican successors. Accordingly, the Founding Fathers of the United States faced some (still unanswered) questions about the design of an etiquette suitable for a democratic society, which arise from the tensions inherent in such conflicting desiderata as Dignity or Obeisance, Ceremony or Efficiency, and Comfort or Taste:

1. Is obeisance to distinction of personal achievement any less offensive than to distinction of birth?

2. How can rules of conduct in the workplace acknowledge the professional hierarchy, from apprentice to master, without implying subservience?

3. Must the lowest, crudest of styles of conduct necessarily serve as the norm, or can one aim at a higher, more refined general standard of deportment?

We begin our attempt to fill the lacuna left by philosophers by considering the nature of the connection between morality and etiquette. It is not our intent here to enter at length into the argument about the categorical status of moral imperatives, regarding which Mrs. Foot herself conceded, in a somewhat apologetic footnote added in 1977 on republication of her paper, "difficulties have been argued *ad nauseam*." We merely state our agreement with Mrs. Foot's position that there can be no imperatives that have an automatic reason-giving force arising *ex nihilo* from pure reason, independently of any desires, beliefs, interests, needs, or affects of the agents to which they are meant to apply. Reason, as David Hume noted, is and ought to be the slave of the passions. Thus the reason-giving force of all imperatives, including that of categorical imperatives, would have to derive from the implied conditional form "if you want (or believe or care about) x, you should do y."

The practical (in the Kantian sense) distinction between categorical and hypothetical imperatives, then, has to focus on the nature of x. If, on the one hand, x is a rational consequence of the ensemble of fundamental beliefs, wants, or interests of the agent (such as claimed for the moral point of view by Mr. Frankena), of which he or she may not even be consciously aware (that is, are held tacitly), then the imperative can be said to be of the categorical kind. Its "automatic" reason-giving force devolves from the condition that the agent is not at liberty not to want x and, hence, is rationally obligated to do y. If, on the other hand, x devolves from a viewpoint to which subscription is voluntary (for example, you want to be in Boston by noon), then y (you should take the 10:00 A.M. shuttle from La Guardia airport) can be said to be of the

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hypothetical kind, because the agent may act rationally in deciding not to want x if getting it takes doing y. Put more generally, different kinds of imperatives form a categorical-hypothetical continuum, whose metric is the degree to which the condition x is fundamental to an agent's beliefs or wants, or is difficult to put aside. Moral imperatives lie near the categorical end of the spectrum, whereas imperatives such as Messrs. McGoldrick and Potter's name-on-flyleaf rule lie near the hypothetical end. Indeed, the imperative *(y)* "Always write your name on the flyleaf of your book before you lend it to me" would not be far from the center of the categorical-hypothetical spectrum if the implied reason-giving force *(x)* were "if you ever want to see it again."

The concept of the categorical-hypothetical continuum has no place for Messrs. McGoldrick and Potter's additional requirement for categorical status of an imperative, of course. Their formulation of the subcontrary of the name-on-flyleaf rule could *not* be willed as universal law without rational contradiction, if its reason-giving force derived from the point of view (widely subscribed to by camp counselors and airlines) that all personal belongings should be marked with their owners' names.

To clarify the relation between morality and etiquette, it is necessary to distinguish between the fundamental beliefs, wants, and interests of people and the set of normative rules, or imperatives, that are to govern social relations in their service. Unfortunately this clarification is impeded by the existence of considerable confusion regarding the meaning and proper usage of the key terms *ethics*, *morality*, *manners*, and *etiquette*. There is no generally agreed on, unique usage of the term *ethics*, or distinction between *ethics* and *morality*. Nevertheless, it seems to be widely admitted that the two terms—the former of Greek and the latter of Latin provenance—do not refer to the same thing. Although there is some similarity between the moral point of view and what Bernard Williams calls "ethics," since he wants "morality to be understood as a particular development of the ethical," his explication matches none of the several definitions of *ethics* offered by the *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (third edition) and seems to have the direct inverse relation to *morality* as that implied by at least one of them. So we will avoid "ethics."

Following Mr. Frankena, we refer to that part of our fundamental beliefs or wants which includes such notions as duty, obligation, compassion, and sacredness of the person as the moral point of view. It provides the implied, reason-giving x's of moral imperatives. By a *moral person* we mean one who subscribes to the moral point of view. By *morality* we mean the set of normative rules—the commanded y's of moral imperatives—derived from the moral point of view.

By *manners*, we mean another part of our fundamental beliefs or

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wants that includes such notions as communal harmony, dignity of the person, a need for cultural coherence, and an aesthetic sense. Manners provide the implied, reason-giving *x*'s for imperatives of social conduct—in Mrs. Foot's parlance the want to do, or the belief in doing, "what's done." The set of normative rules devolving from manners—the *y*'s commanded by them—is what we call "etiquette."

Little is known about the behavior, let alone the fundamental beliefs, of early peoples, members of the genus *Homo*. But it is not implausible that subscription to beliefs fundamental for the regulation of social behavior, such as the moral point of view and manners, are of high antiquity and form part of the evolutionary endowment characteristic of our species, as Donald Campbell, by way of an extension of the evolutionary epistemology of Konrad Lorenz, has pointed out.

We do know a few things: 1) As many as one hundred thousand years ago, Neanderthal people troubled to bury their dead in a stereotyped, ritualistic manner, suggesting that belief in the sacredness and dignity of the person must already have been present, along with etiquette rules specifying how this belief should be expressed upon a person's death. 2) As many as forty thousand years ago, Cro-Magnon people produced artifacts and paintings that we now admire for their artistic value, showing that by that time one prerequisite for manners—namely, an aesthetic sense required for the appreciation of ritual—was present. 3) Young children appear to develop a sense of empathy autonomously, independently of their cultural context, showing that another prerequisite for morality—namely, a concern for the interests of others—is one of our native endowments. 4) Contemporary, so-called "primitive" peoples, whose hunter-gatherer mode of life is often (though possibly mistakenly) taken to exemplify the social forms of early man, subscribe to fundamental beliefs that can be readily identified as the moral point of view as well as manners. All this suggests that the question "Why should I be moral (and want to do 'what's done')?" is simply naughty, posing a pedagogical rather than ontological problem, and calls for Nanny's stern response: "Because."

As long as the horizon of human social life did not reach beyond the narrowly circumscribed group of the hunter-gatherer family or the clan, any rules (or sanctions imposed in case of their violation) needed for the regulation of social relations in conformance with the moral point of view and manners would be known to and understood by every member of the group, even though the rules were ad hoc or idiosyncratic. This situation began to change dramatically ten thousand years ago, in neolithic times, with the rise of urban-agricultural civilizations and their large settlements, economic surpluses, and formal division of labor. In

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contrast to a life lived wholly within family and clan, civilized life in urban settlements now required codified imperatives of morality and etiquette, as explicit systems of rules for dealing with strangers, beyond family or clan, and for specialized conduct toward fellow citizens belonging to a wide range of social types, from slave to priest and king.

A codified system of imperatives has to consist of an easily intelligible and ecumenical formulation of the rules of conduct to foster predictability, coherence, peace, and harmony in the lives of the citizenry, and in return has to demand that each individual surrender some freedom of action for the common good. So it is no coincidence that the appearance of formal religion, with its professional priesthood and religious precepts, and of jurisprudence, with its professional judges and secular law, a set of codified rules governing social conduct in accord with subscription to the moral point of view, coincided with the rise of civilization. Although the record is less clear as to just when etiquette first arose as a set of codified rules devolving from subscription to manners, it was certainly in place by the time of predynastic Egypt and archaic Greece. By way of a homely paraphrase of this historical development, one may say that, if by "human nature" we refer to the tacit, involuntary subscription to the moral point of view and to manners, which successfully governed the social conduct of the hunter-gatherer, formal religion, law, and etiquette can be said to compensate for the failure of human nature under the conditions of civilization. There can be no such thing as civilized living in the absence of etiquette and law. Even if one has a well-developed intuitive feeling for the moral point of view and manners, one cannot navigate through civilized society by social instinct alone, or by mere reliance on one's human nature.

How do etiquette and law differ as regulative systems? Both regulate social conduct in the interest of community harmony. But while law addresses serious violations of morality, the first purpose of etiquette is to soften personal antagonisms and thus to avert conflicts, just as the first purpose of diplomacy is to avert war. Thus the law handles conflicts threatening life or property that etiquette has failed to avert. In line with this division of labor, law dispenses fierce sanctions for violation of its rules, such as fines, imprisonment, and loss of life. Etiquette handles all those conflicts that can be controlled by restraints for which voluntary compliance is generally obtainable without legal sanctions. That is why etiquette restricts freedom of expression more than the law does. Much of what people would say if they expressed their thoughts and feelings indiscriminately would be extremely provocative to others and a cause of social disharmony. It is within my legal right to tell you that you are ugly, or that your baby is, but such locution is likely to lead to ugly—which is

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to say, dangerous—behavior. Etiquette rejects the latter-day encounter-group, rap-session theory of social harmony, which seeks to clear the air by frankly expressing one's every thought and feeling. Instead by proscribing the voicing of offensive, albeit sincerely held, opinions, etiquette reduces the need for lawsuits for slander or libel.

The only sanction available to etiquette for non-compliance with its rules is shame. In that respect, etiquette resembles international law, which, like etiquette, depends on voluntary compliance by sovereign states and, in case of non-compliance, can only resort to national shame as its sanction, short of retaliation by acts of war. Even shame is merely a voluntary sanction, since it requires the collusion of righteous shamers and self-effacing shamees. In fact, etiquette may even demand *not* invoking the only sanction available to it, as expressed in the Golden Rule of Manners promulgated in the sixteenth century by Erasmus in his *De Civilitate,* one of the few etiquette books written by a philosopher: "It is part of the highest civility if, while never erring yourself, you ignore the errors of others."

The breadth of the general subscription to manners is demonstrated by the fact that even those people most devoted to lawlessness—those with the least developed moral point of view—still hold the conviction that others should be courteous to them. In the summer of 1986, there were more than thirty assaults on the Los Angeles freeways in which motorists shot strangers in other cars. To justify their mayhem the assailants cited violations of simple traffic etiquette (failure to respond promptly to the assailant's signal requesting permission to pass, not ceding the right of way to the assailant, and pulling in front of the assailant's car so that he was forced to slow down) by their victims as sufficient provocation. Thus their plea was that they were merely upholding the standards of highway etiquette by punishing miscreants.

Recent changes in the social regulation of smoking offer an exemplar of the historical dialectic between etiquette and the law. The task of separating smokers from non-smokers used to be accomplished quite satisfactorily by the rules of etiquette. In addition to such devices as smoking rooms and smoking jackets to protect non-smokers from exposure to smoke, there was a smoking ban during dinner. After dinner non-smokers (a.k.a. ladies) repaired to the drawing room, while smokers (a.k.a. gentlemen) enjoyed their cigars. But when smoking became common to both sexes, etiquette turned uncharacteristically lax and allowed the will of the smoking majority to abrogate the rights of the non-smoking minority. Not only did the rules change to permit smoking almost everywhere, but they even required that the formal table setting include little cigarette urns and ashtrays, for the diners' *ad libidum* use.

Only recently have non-smokers managed to change the rules back,

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so that it has again come to be considered rude to smoke near non-smokers without first seeking their wholehearted agreement. However, a declining recognition of the need to obey etiquette when it goes against one's personal wishes made enforcement of these rules difficult. Smokers who refused to comply voluntarily with the new rules incensed non-smokers, not only because of their continued exposure to smoke, but also because of the galling refusal of smokers to observe the new etiquette. The offending non-smokers began to treat the offending (rude) smokers rudely in turn, abandoning other rules of etiquette that prohibit insulting others, criticizing their personal habits, and announcing that they are about to die. It was at this impasse that the law took over from etiquette, on the grounds that medical findings that smoke inhaled indirectly by non-smokers may be injurious to their health made the conflict a sufficiently serious matter for the law's attention. More and more laws restricting the freedom of smokers are being passed these days, regulating (or proscribing) smoking in virtually all public places, such as aircraft, restaurants, and offices. Smoking in the private domain still remains an unregulated grand melee, however.

This example shows that the law can be said to exist to compensate for the failure of etiquette. If we had perfect etiquette, we would not need the law. So one might suppose that when law takes over, etiquette should retreat gracefully from the scene. But law cannot be administered justly without etiquette. The etiquette of jurisprudence, governing proper behavior in the courtroom, is extremely strict, just as it is in other professions that must deal with strongly felt conflicts—parliament, the military, diplomacy, the Church, athletics. In all these enterprises, strict adherence is required to rules that specify how one dresses, when and where one sits or stands, how one moves, and how one acknowledges superiors. Such strictness is necessary because the more orderly is the form of a social structure, the more conflict it can support. Etiquette requires participants in adversary proceedings to present their opposing views in a restrained manner, to provide a disciplined and respectful ambience in which to settle conflicts peacefully. Everybody knows what is meant by the statement "My distinguished colleague seems to be unfortunately misinformed," but this polite circumlocution permits the proceedings to continue, rather than having them interrupted by a fist fight set off by direct locution ("You're lying, you bastard").

The dependence of the just administration of law on etiquette was demonstrated dramatically in the 1960s, at the trials of the Chicago Seven and the Black Panthers. Here the defendants deliberately defied the rules of the courtroom etiquette—addressing the judge by his first name, wearing judicial robes, putting their feet on tables and chairs, speaking out of turn, shouting, swearing, and not behaving very nicely in

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general. The judges sought to establish order in the courtroom, using the weapon of contempt of court, ordering the defendants manacled and gagged, and having them removed from the courtroom altogether. But these judicial remedies, in turn, violated the judges' explicit Constitutional commitment to conducting a fair trial, at which the defendant has the right to be present and in a condition that is not prejudicial to the jury's findings.

Which is more important, we may ask, the defendant's Constitutional right to attend his or her own trial or mere courtroom etiquette? On appeal, the United States Supreme Court found in favor of etiquette: A misbehaving defendant may be removed from the courtroom. From this ruling it does not follow, of course, that etiquette is more important than the Constitution. But adherence to etiquette is a prerequisite for any aspect of civilized life, including jurisprudence.

Along with its regulative functions, etiquette serves as a system of symbols, whose semantic content provides for predictability in social relations, especially among strangers. Examples of the symbolic function include the rules governing greeting, eating, dressing, and restraining bodily functions. Mrs. Foot and her adversaries seem to have been even less familiar with this aspect of etiquette than with etiquette's regulative function. Their view of etiquette was evidently grounded in the commonsense notion that a rule of etiquette is silly if it cannot be directly, obviously, logically, and functionally justified. But inasmuch as the essence of a symbolic system is that its symbols refer to something other than themselves, and that the relation between a symbol and the thing that it stands for is more often than not arbitrary, many rules of etiquette cannot be given a direct functional justification, at least not (in structuralist parlance) at the level of their surface structure. For that reason, many rules of etiquette are not simply a matter of common sense and have to be learned rather than deduced from first principles.

Once learned and correctly interpreted, the symbols of etiquette permit one person to recognize such essential attributes of other persons as their intentions, status, friendliness, or hostility, and thus to deal appropriately with a wide range of social situations and relationships. Thus it is essential to teach children the meaning of the symbols of etiquette (rather than telling them to "act naturally"), so that they will know what to expect of others and how their own behavior will be interpreted. The child who grows up taking literally a statement such as "Please make yourself at home," or using the same language and attitude toward teachers and playmates is going to have a rough life.

Another reason for the demand for strict etiquette by the law, the military, diplomacy, the Church, and athletics is that compliance with

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the rules of conduct is taken to symbolize adherence to the particular values that these professions require: fairness, respect, obedience, valor, or piety. Of course, such symbolic expressions of adherence to shared values may be insincere, since it is possible to lie just as well by means of non-linguistic symbols as by means of words. There is nothing like the desire to get a job or a verdict of not guilty for making people recognize the wisdom of following the conventions of dress and behavior rather than their personal choices or "natural" inclinations. The well-dressed, soft-spoken grandmother is a more effective anti-war agitator than the unkempt, obscenity-spouting youth.

We may contrast the benefits of symbolic affirmation of adherence to shared values with the damage done by people who take it unto themselves to violate a rule of etiquette, because, like Mrs. Foot's Gedanken-nonconformist, they have their "own good reasons for ignoring this piece of nonsense" or deny that they have "reason to do 'what's done.'" Such rule violation gives offense, because it is necessarily interpreted as an overt defiance of, or an indifference to, or an antagonism toward, the interests of the community. The person who disregards his hosts' expectations about what time or in what kind of attire he will arrive for a party is signifying disdain for their standards as much as the person who refuses to stand up when the national anthem is sung.

There is, of course, ideologically motivated civil disobedience of etiquette as there is of law. But people who mean to change the values of the community for its own supposed benefit by such acts must be prepared to accept the punitive consequences of their defiance. They would be well advised to violate only the rule that offends them, carefully adhering to other conventions, if they do not wish to have their protests interpreted as a general disdain for other people.

There can be few people left nowadays, even among hard-core materialists, who would deny that man cannot live by bread alone and who would question the legitimacy of the sacred and its aesthetic as a means to satisfy those spiritual needs that make us distinctly human and transcend the physical needs we share with other animals. Nevertheless, it is not widely appreciated that in our own enlightened industrialized societies ritual still performs a central role in the satisfaction of those spiritual needs. Many people have nothing but scorn for our own, familiar rituals, which they reject as silly, while they may be enthusiastic about preserving the integrity of the strange customs and folklore of the jungle dwellers of the Upper Amazon, which they find full of wonderful significance. Or, while they may adore the rain dance of the Hopi, they may refuse to follow their parents' holiday dinner traditions. It is in its role as a system for the codification of ritual in the service of the sacred

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that etiquette has yet a third function, in addition to its regulative and symbolic functions.

By way of two examples of the codification of ritual by etiquette, we may consider funerals and weddings. Rather than leaving it to individuals as a do-it-yourself project to work out how to come to terms with their chaotic feelings on such momentously emotional social occasions, the ritual codified in etiquette facilitates this process and, additionally, provides for a sense of social cohesiveness and sharing of our humanity.

In the lives of most people, even of those who do not usually trouble themselves with good manners, a wedding is one occasion at which they acknowledge a desire to do "what's done." This leads them to buy etiquette books, hire wedding consultants, and accept etiquette advice from such wedding industry tradespeople as caterers and photographers. In spite of sometimes conflicting customs and difficulties in fitting the circumstances of the families of bride and groom into the general pattern of the ritual, there is an admitted satisfaction in the use of traditional ceremony to ease accommodation to the strange idea that two people and their families who have been strangers can suddenly become relatives.

Even though the problem posed by death—how can someone whom one knew only yesterday as a living person be today no more than a hunk of decaying organic tissue?—remains as deep an ontological puzzle as ever, funeral rites, in contrast to wedding rites, are now often improvised. As a reaction against elaborate nineteenth-century rites of mourning, which restricted the clothing and behavior of a large circle of mourners long after the demise of the deceased, regardless of the depth of their emotional bereavement, mourning etiquette has been largely abandoned. With no outward signs (such as black garments, black wreaths on doors, or black-bordered writing paper) to warn others of the mourners' vulnerability and no customs of seclusion from society, the bereaved are unprotected against the demands of normal social life, which they may be unable to handle. Indeed, they are often encouraged to plunge into social situations where joviality is expected—and yet, just as often, are deemed heartless when they succeed in behaving as if nothing had happened. Etiquette's codifying behavior under bereavement allows a period of readjustment safe from prying judgments of others as well as from normal social expectations.

One of the arguments advanced by Messrs. McGoldrick and Potter for distinguishing the imperatives of morality from those of etiquette was that the former are categorical, or could not be otherwise (in the sense that their subcontrary *could not* be willed as a universal law without rational contradiction) whereas the latter are merely hypothetical, or could be otherwise (in the sense that their subcontrary *could* be willed

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as a universal law without rational contradiction). This argument is defective on at least two grounds. First, it fails to take into account that, of the three conceptually separable functions of etiquette, only the symbolic function has arbitrary rules that could obviously be otherwise, while the rules of the regulative and ritual functions may or may not be purely conventional. Second, the argument fails to make the structuralist distinction between the deep structure of a rule, which may represent a universal imperative of morality or regulative etiquette, and its surface structure, which could be tied to a specific time, place, society, or class. To provide just one example for the deep-surface dichotomy of a moral imperative, we may consider the non-conventional deep-structural rule: "Help the needy." One of the specific surface transforms of this rule used to be: "Give alms to the beggar," but that transform has lately been changed to its contrary, namely: "Don't give alms to the beggar" (so as to help to motivate him to rehabilitate himself under a workfare program).

As for the distinction between deep rules and surface rules of regulative etiquette, we may also refer to the former as "natural etiquette" and to the latter as "positive etiquette"—*physis* and *nomos*—just as the philosophy of law distinguishes between natural and positive law. Natural etiquette and natural law could not, while positive etiquette and positive law could, be otherwise. A rule of natural (traffic) law is: "Vehicles moving in opposite directions travel on opposite sides of the road." Abandoning this rule, or adopting its contrary, would lead to a traffic nightmare. A positive (conventional) transform is: "All automobiles travel on their driver's right-hand side of the road," which works just as well, except for foreign tourists, when the left side is mandated. A rule of natural etiquette is: "Behave respectfully in a sacred place of worship." The contrary of this rule permitting or commanding disrespectful behavior would be incompatible with having sacred places of worship, and hence irrational. Two mutually incompatible (and hence obviously conventional) positive transforms of this natural rule are: "Uncover your head when in a place of worship (man in church)" and "Cover your head when in a place of worship (man in synagogue)."

The rules of etiquette change continuously, but because etiquette is naturally conservative, as are the law, religion, and language—all of which must take into account the inertia of the beliefs of their constituencies owing to affective ties to tradition—its adaptations to changing circumstances and social philosophy are so slow that they may be imperceptible to the unobservant. In any case, these changes pertain mainly to the surface, positive rules, while leaving the deep, natural rules unaffected. For example, we may consider once more the ladies-first rule. It is often assumed that this rule, which feminists find offensive

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and seek to relegate to the ash can of outdated customs, has always existed as a non-negotiable tenet of Western (as opposed to Asian) etiquette. But it is only one of the rules of positive, not of natural etiquette, and therefore subject to gradual change. (For the sake of good manners it is to be hoped that this change will not require women barking "My arm is not broken" at men who still attempt the innocent, old-timey, minor politeness of holding a door open for them). In fact, the ladies-first rule did not always exist and, from the women's point of view, was a great improvement over its fifth-century Greek predecessor: ladies-never. Moreover, the rule applies only to the private world, where the differences between ladies and gentlemen may be highly relevant for their activities, and not to the workaday world, where rational business practice demands not making gender distinctions. Precedence in the workaday world is by standing, not gender: chief executive officers, rather than ladies, first. We are now slowly headed toward a new system of positive rules of precedence in the private world, according to which age, rather than gender, is likely to be the determinative factor. This would resolve the conflict between the regulative and the symbolic functions of the ladies-first rule in favor of the former.

Before we turn to the relation of morality and etiquette, let us briefly consider the belief held by some people (who may include some philosophers of the "silly rules" persuasion) that etiquette is frivolous, or snobbish, or repressive—unworthy of serious attention, except perhaps as a social evil. One reason for that belief appears to be the previously mentioned demand of etiquette for hypocritical concealment of one's true feelings toward others. That is to say, by asking people to pretend to have higher moral qualities than they actually have, etiquette is perceived as a subversive force that undermines the moral imperative of truth telling. But, as we have already seen, despite their alleged special dignity and necessity and automatic reason-giving force, the imperatives of morality do not form a set of rules which can be universally applied without conflict to all situations and none of which ever has to yield precedence to any other rule to reach a valid moral judgment. For instance, if I were hiding Anne Frank in my attic, I would not be morally obliged to respond truthfully to a Gestapo officer inquiring into her whereabouts. And so there is no a priori reason why, to reach the greater good in some social situations, the imperative of morality of truth telling should not yield to the imperative of etiquette of hypocritical conduct, for the sake of promoting a harmonious coexistence. While there are now people who feel morally justified by the mandate of truth telling to make remarks that etiquette has always categorized as insults ("You're too fat"; "You ought to get married"), few of their recipients would agree that this reflected the correct choice between conflicting virtues.

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Another reason for the belief in etiquette as a social evil is the idea that it is used mainly as an instrument of oppression—a tool of elitism. This view should not come naturally to many philosophers, among whom, since Plato, the ideal of an intellectual elite has been ever popular. Accordingly, Erasmus, in his *De Civilitate*, took it for granted that it is exactly the people risen to leadership, thanks to their own intellectual merit, who should set the highest standards of behavior.

General rudeness, or the lack of obeisance to etiquette, is much more of a burden to the poor than to the rich, who can usually pay for special treatment and buy their way out of any trouble caused by their own rude behavior. The concept of noblesse oblige is etiquette's demand that the rich not only avoid taking easy advantage of the poor, but that the rich actually treat the poor more considerately than their peers. One of the most heinous crimes known to etiquette is being rude to a subservient person, such as an employee, who is not in a position to respond in kind. Etiquette considers such behavior far more reprehensible than rudeness toward an equal or a superior.

Finally, let us address the nature of the relation between the moral point of view and manners on the one hand, and between morality and etiquette on the other. As we noted, the moral point of view and manners both form part of the tacit, fundamental normative beliefs, wants, and interests in regard to structuring, or bringing order to our social relations with other people. As human beings we subscribe to those beliefs—we are moral and want to do "what's done," simply "Because." In view of the considerable overlap in the aspects of the human condition with which the moral point of view and manners are concerned, they can hardly be entirely different, clearly distinguishable components of the ensemble of our fundamental beliefs, wants, and interests. If a distinction is to be made between them, then it could be said that the moral point of view tends to be concerned with aspects of the human condition that involve matters of potentially grave consequence for life, limb, and property, whereas aspects of concern to manners tend to involve matters of potentially less grave consequences, such as offenses against personal dignity, sacred and profane ritual, and the aesthetic sense. For example, an insult, normally a violation of regulative etiquette, becomes a matter with which the law has to deal when it appears to have threatened the insultee's mental health or livelihood. Desecrating the national flag is a violation of all three functions of etiquette—regulative, symbolic, and sacred; the act becomes a violation of law if it provokes a breach of the peace.

Morality and etiquette, the sets of imperatives, derived from the moral point of view and manners, respectively, for the sake of bringing

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order into our existence, are not, therefore, the totally separate systems for the governance of social relations that Mrs. Foot makes them out to be. In fact, there seems to be as little point in trying to draw a line of demarcation between them as there is in trying to draw such a line between imperatives of the categorical and hypothetical kinds. Morality and regulative etiquette, too, form another sort of continuum of imperatives, whose metric is the gravity of the consequences of their intentional violations. Morality lies toward that end of the spectrum where the consequences of violations (murder, for example) are grave. Many imperatives of morality are embodied in secular and religious law established by authority of a sovereign legislator, with severe, usually formally stipulated, penalties as sanctions and retributions provided for violations. A highly structured judicial system exists for administering the law and resolving cases where the legal system leads to conflicting imperatives.

Regulative etiquette lies toward the other end of the spectrum, where the consequences of violations—for example, disgusting others by one's way of eating—are less grave. Many imperatives of etiquette are part of an oral tradition and usually owe their definitive formulation to writers of etiquette books. There are no formally stipulated penalties for violations, with shame and social ostracism as the only sanctions. There is no formal system for administering etiquette, and the resolution of conflicts arising from its rules is in the hands of self-appointed judges, such as Miss Manners, who also decree new rules of etiquette. Nevertheless it is as true for etiquette as it is for morality (and the law) that in the long run, its rules can prevail only with consent of the governed—that is, it must be rationally connectable with the moral point of view and manners.

Between these extremes of the spectrum, in its middle range, where the consequences of violations—for example, offending the dignity of the person—are of intermediate gravity, there is a large sector where, as shown by the various examples presented above, morality and etiquette overlap.

Morality and etiquette form a single, albeit highly complex—and by no means conflict-free—system of rules for the governance of social conduct. Despite the prevalence of rule conflicts in actual social situations, the imperatives of morality and etiquette all take the unconditional form characteristic of the categorical kind "you ought to do *y*." This is so because the reason-giving force of the oughts of etiquette, no less than that of moral oughts, devolves rationally from fundamental normative beliefs, wants, and interests to which we subscribe involuntarily and tacitly by virtue of our humanity. In view of its source, the morality-etiquette system is essential for the practical and spiritual aspects of civilized life. Were morality and etiquette to fall by the wayside, civilization would disappear.

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The Torment of D. W. Griffith

KENNETH S. LYNN

The first masterpiece by an American director to emerge from the post–World War I search for a new art of film was D. W. Griffith's *Broken Blossoms,* which had its premiere in New York in May 1919. Filmed in constricted studio settings under artificial lights, rather than in the open expanses of California fields in which Griffith had mounted so many of the scenes in *The Birth of a Nation*, *Intolerance*, and *Hearts of the World,* the picture was characterized by attention to atmosphere, involuted acting styles, and innovative photography. Yet if *Broken Blossoms* was an exquisite piece of work, it was also excruciating, reaching levels of emotional intensity that were no less frenzied than those which German audiences would begin to encounter eight months later in *The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari* and climaxing in a denouement of uncompromising grimness. Whether *Caligari* was intended to expose fatal tendencies inherent in the German national psyche is a fiercely debated question. The hidden dynamics in *Broken Blossoms*, on the other hand, were indisputably personal. The story of the three principal characters—a Yellow Man, so called, from China, played by Richard Barthelmess; a Limehouse boxer with a cauliflower ear, played by Donald Crisp; and the boxer's fifteen-year-old illegitimate daughter, played by the incomparable Lillian Gish, aged twenty-two—bore a nightmarishly distorted resemblance to a real-life situation involving Gish and Griffith, when the latter at age forty-three was old enough to have been his leading lady's father.

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They first met, Gish and Griffith, on a humid summer morning in 1912, when the fifteen-year-old Lillian and her fourteen-year-old sister Dorothy paid a visit to the brownstone mansion on East Fourteenth Street in Manhattan that housed the movie studios of the Biograph Company. They were looking for a childhood friend of theirs named Gladys Smith, whom they had come to know during the period in which all three girls had achieved precocious success on the stage. After years of being out of touch with Gladys, Lillian and Dorothy had recently recognized her in a Biograph one-reeler entitled *Lena and the Geese.*

Their reunion with Mary Pickford—as Gladys Smith now called herself—was warm; but when the director of *Lena and the Geese* came up to be introduced to the pretty visitors, Lillian became very tense. Griffith held himself like a king, she remembered, and his beak-nosed profile recalled the images of emperors on Roman coins; underneath his wide-brimmed straw hat, which he wore indoors and out, his hooded, deep-set eyes seemed to be dissecting his new acquaintances. Abruptly, he challenged the Gishes to tell him if they had the talent to act in movies—and then insisted on conducting them to a rehearsal hall to determine the answer for himself. En route, he ordered Mary Pickford to inform Lionel Barrymore, Elmer Booth, and other actors on the Biograph payroll that they must join him in the hall immediately. Once the men had arrived, Griffith gave Lillian a blue bow to wear in her hair and Dorothy a red bow, so that he could refer to them by colors, rather than by their names. Next he announced what he had in mind.

"We will rehearse the story of two girls trapped in an isolated house while thieves are

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trying to get in and rob the safe. . . . Now, Red, you hear a strange noise. Run to your sister. Blue, you're scared, too. Look toward me, where the camera is. Show your fear. You hear something. What is it? You're two frightened children, trapped in a lonely house by these brutes. They're in the next room." Wheeling around to his group of actors, Griffith pulled the nearest of them into the action. "Elmer, pry open a window. Climb into the house. Kick down the door to the room that holds the safe. You are mean! These girls are hiding thousands of dollars. Think of what *that* will buy! Let your avarice show—*Blue*, you hear the door breaking. You run in a panic to bolt it—"

"What door?" Lillian cried.

"Right in front of you! I know there's no door, but pretend there is. Run to the telephone. Start to use it. No one answers. You realize the wires have been cut. Tell the camera what you feel. Fear—*more fear!* Look into the lens! Now you see a gun come through the hole as he knocks the stovepipe to the floor. Look scared, I tell you."

According to Lillian's autobiography, she and her sister were already practically paralyzed with fright, so it was not difficult for them to obey Griffith. But still he wasn't satisfied. "No, that's not enough! Girls, hold each other. Cower in the corner." Suddenly the director pulled a real gun from his pocket and began chasing the girls around the room, shooting it off. Neither of the Gishes was aware that the bullets were being aimed at the ceiling. "He's gone mad!" Lillian thought, as she and Dorothy scurried around the room, looking frantically for an exit.

At last, the shooting ceased. Griffith put away his gun. He was smiling. "That will make a wonderful scene," he said. "You have expressive bodies. I can use you. Do you want to work for me? Would you like to make the picture we just rehearsed?" After a brief hesitation, the Gishes accepted the offer, and a few weeks later *An Unseen Enemy*, as the picture was called, went into production.

A vicious man penetrating the confined space in which helpless young women cower in terror: variations on that situation recur with remarkable frequency in Griffith's early movies, and the violence, degradation, and control with which the women are threatened constitute symbolic forms of attempted rape. But fortunately for the maidens, men who love them become conscious of their peril and ride to the rescue in the nick of time. If the menacing villains in these pictures seemed to have come straight out of stage melodrama, it is no wonder, for they were modeled in part on the tramp who figures so importantly either as a sinister or a comic character in the turn-of-the-century plays that Griffith came across in his early career as an actor in touring dramatic companies. The tramp shown in the melodramas was modeled on a contemporary social type, for in the hard period commencing with the panic of 1893, shocking numbers of men had hit the road in the United States, eking out an existence by begging and stealing. Fearsome specimens of these migrant non-workers—and of the non-migrant non-workers succinctly called bums—became personally known to Griffith as a result of his having been forced by dwindling funds to live in malodorous flophouses during an extended stay in New York at the close of the nineties. The villains he conjured up in his Biograph thrillers sprang from his recollection of the thieves he had been frightened of in the flophouses as well as out of his conversance with a memorable character in the melodramatic repertoire.

The dramatic confrontations between villains and virgins that Griffith filmed likewise had a double origin. While such confrontations had long been the stuff of which popular plays were made, his employments of them were energized by his own psychological demons. For the great director was a sexual addict in whom attractive young women aroused violently contradictory impulses. Only by understanding this can we begin to comprehend Griffith's utter fascination with Edgar Allan Poe. In a number of Poe's tales, so the poet Richard Wilbur has observed, a woman's redemptive love or spotless honor is the ground of contention between two men, one of them lofty-minded and the other base or brutish. The observation not only applies to Griffith's movies as well, but to his tormentedly divided personality. When he went after the Gish girls with a live gun blazing, there is good reason to believe, there was something more at work in him than just the desire to administer a screen test.

A link of another sort to Poe is that Griffith's heritage was Southern. His father, Jacob Wark Griffith, popularly known as Thunder Jake, or Roaring Jake, because of the carrying power

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of his voice, had once owned five slaves and a prosperous farm in Oldham County, Kentucky, and during the Civil War had served with bravery as a Confederate cavalry officer. Upon his return to Kentucky, he bore the scars of at least two wounds, if not the five he boasted of. The years of life that now remained to him were mainly given over to drinking, gambling, and windy reminiscences of war. His son David was born in 1875. Five years later, Thunder Jake died, leaving a wife, seven children—of whom David was the youngest—and many debts.

Young David had adored and idealized his father, yet had never felt able to count on his love. As he confessed in his unfinished autobiography, "I often wondered if [my father] cared anything about me particularly. I am forced to doubt it. As far as I can remember he never seemed to show anybody his feelings toward them." About his mother, Griffith likewise had desolate thoughts: ". . . a silent sort of woman . . . so silent and quiet . . . that I never dreamed she loved me until she was about seventy years old when I discovered that stern, cold, hard exterior covered a tremendous emotional and . . . affectionate nature that was terrible in its intensity." Only from the attentions of his sisters did he receive any sense of female love.

From his excessive shyness as a boy we can judge that he lacked self-esteem, of which an important sign was Griffith's conviction that his big nose made him unattractive to girls. In compensation, he conjured up enormous ambitions; indeed, they were imbued with fantasy. Thus, on the way home from school one day, he experienced a religious vision. As a result of a sleet storm followed by a quick freeze, the branches of the trees were covered with ice. With the morning sun on them, they were radiant with light. In the center of that light, he was sure he saw the face of Christ. Adoringly, he spoke to the Savior. "My name is David, and you know that means dearly beloved. I do hope you may like me a little, that I might even become your dearly beloved, because I love you and always have." That he was marked for a special destiny became the solacing certainty of the youngster's life.

Griffith found his métier as a movie director in 1908. In the course of the next five years, close to 450 films, most of them one-reelers, were improvised by him without shooting scripts, even when his source was a famous poem or piece of fiction. Out of a need for exciting modes of story telling, he also developed an entire grammar of cinematic expression. From the work of other filmmakers, he appropriated and brilliantly refined the close-up shot. Other techniques that are associated with his name, such as the spot-iris opening, the dissolve, and cross-cutting from one scene of action to another, were familiar to him from his days on the stage, for they had been introduced there by theatrical directors who had grown impatient with the lack of plasticity in their medium. Still other techniques, such as backlighting, Griffith worked out himself, with the aid of his gifted cameraman Billy Bitzer. By the time of his departure from Biograph in 1913, his movies had no superiors in technical accomplishment anywhere in the world, and *The Birth of a Nation* in 1915 and *Intolerance* the following year would mark the emergence of the "magician of tempo and montage," as Sergei Eisenstein would later say of him.

But for a man who had once had direct contact with Jesus Christ, technically marvelous story telling was not enough. Some remarks Griffith addressed to Lillian Gish in 1914 disclosed his messianic aspirations. "Do you know," he rhetorically asked her, "that we are playing to the world? What we film tomorrow will strike the hearts of the world. And they will know what we are saying. We've gone beyond Babel, beyond words. We've found a universal language—a power that can make men brothers and end wars forever." On other occasions, he spoke of the movies as operating like "the hand of God" in that they could lift people out of their "commonplace existence" into a realm of "poetic simulations," and he called on his players to think of themselves as vessels containing the same "divine fluid" that had given Napoleon and George Washington the power to transform the world. In accordance with his belief that images of pure beauty could make a movie seem like a message from God Himself, he concluded *The Birth of a Nation* with an image of Jesus. *Intolerance* similarly ends with a vision of perfect love and eternal peace. The newspaper reporter who hailed Griffith as a "prophet" who speaks through "shadow sermons more powerful than the pulpit" was a man after the director's own megalomanic heart.

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In the Progressive Era of Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, Griffith also thought of himself as a reformer of manners and morals. Late in life, he would recall that "Reform [in those days] was sweeping the country, newspapers were laying down a barrage against gambling, rum, and light ladies, particularly light ladies . . . so I decided to reform the motion picture industry." To that end, he played the stern Victorian father with his actors and actresses—in his case, I should say the stern Victorian mother—and established strict rules for them, especially for the younger actresses, who were supposed to be chaperoned on the set and were not allowed to receive men in their dressing rooms. Lillian Gish has written that Griffith was also gripped by a virtual "mania for cleanliness." He himself was always impeccably groomed, Gish's account continues, "and he expected the young actresses on the lot to be equally immaculate. A female aspirant would lose out if she weren't scrupulously clean. Once, after an interview with a talented actress whom he had dismissed, he said exasperatedly, 'She just doesn't *look* clean.' " From moral and hygienic lectures to his players, Griffith went on to call for movies that would never "deviate from the Puritan plane," that would always "keep boys and girls along the right lines of conduct." Newspaper talk about youth going away from the old morals was nonsense, in his opinion. "Never since the beginnings of time," he trumpeted, "have there been so many boys and girls who were so clean, so young. . . ."

W. J. Cash observes in his book *The Mind of the South* that, while the "barnyard morality" of male students in Southern colleges and universities following World War I flouted the tradition and forms of Southern Puritanism and the cult of Southern Womanhood, their emancipation was far from complete; and a "subconscious will to escape into being more nearly whole again" filled even the better-known campus seducers with longing for "the old gesturing worship" of feminine virtue and chastity. Griffith, too, was caught between two worlds. Underlying his manic concern with cleanliness lay the haunted knowledge that, by the standards of the moral code he professed, his behavior was filthy.

In 1906, while still trying to make it as an actor in the theater, Griffith had married the actress Linda Arvidson. Five years later, Linda came upon a love letter addressed to her husband, and she sent him an accusatory note about it. In a melancholy reply tinged with self-loathing, Griffith confessed that the author of the love letter was not the first paramour he had ever had, and that "there are sure to be others just as objectionable in every way after her." In conclusion he pleaded, "Let me lead my own life and you yours. . . . I am better off morally, and in all ways, outside of marriage." Just before signing his name, he again emphasized his promiscuity: "Don't think there is some other woman in the case. It is not one, but many." And some of his lovers, he might have added, had he been willing to be fully candid, were nymphets in their early teens. It was a taste that established yet another kinship with Poe, whose tragic life with the fatally consumptive young woman whom he married when she was fourteen and he twenty-seven was sketched by Griffith in a Biograph film entitled *Edgar Allen [sic] Poe*. Linda Arvidson, in her wisdom, immediately granted her husband's plea for a separation, but they did not legally terminate their marriage until 1936. Although Griffith remarried at once, this union, too, would end in divorce.

Struggles between his guilt feelings and his resentments of the guilt led Griffith in 1914, shortly after shifting his headquarters to the Reliance-Majestic Studios in Hollywood, to make a four-reel movie called *The Avenging Conscience*. A remarkable attempt at psychological analysis, as Erwin Panofsky has called it, the movie was based on one of Poe's briefest but most memorable stories, "The Tell-Tale Heart," and augmented with references to several of Poe's poems, most notably "Annabel Lee." As of 1914, literary critics in America still thought of "The Tell-Tale Heart" as a tale of insanity, cruelty, self-destructive hysteria, and nothing more. In order, therefore, to highlight its sexual content, which he himself intuitively grasped, he had to alter the plot.

To play the central role, Griffith selected Henry B. Walthall, a physically undersized, heavy-drinking Hollywood actor in his thirties. With his high forehead, pouchy eyes, and curled black locks carelessly combed, Walthall bore a strong resemblance to Poe, as Lillian Gish, among others, has affirmed. In the movie he is a literarily talented fellow who has been raised from infancy by his

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uncle. The uncle has a useless eye that is covered with a large and ghastly looking black patch, but with his good eye he keeps his nephew under close surveillance. While he does not mind him taking time from his writing to read "The Tell-Tale Heart," his Cyclopean stare communicates stern disapproval of the nephew's attraction to a ripe young woman, played by a full-figured, seventeen-year-old, platinum-blonde actress with the luscious name of Blanche Sweet. The nephew calls the young woman Annabel because he considers her his Annabel Lee, an analogy which suggests that, despite her voluptuousness, he likes to think of her as a child. "*I* was a child and *she* was a child / In this kingdom by the sea," Poe wrote, "But we loved with the love that was more than love— / I and my ANNABEL LEE." Why the uncle is upset by his nephew's involvement with this lovely girl is made clear by the disgust he displays at shows of affection by other young couples in the neighborhood. His balefully puritanical attitude is the envy-riddled product of an aging man's loss of sexual potency, the symbol of which is that ghastly eye patch. In a paroxysm of jealousy, he finally denounces Annabel as a loose woman and banishes her from his house.

If Griffith's camera doesn't let us forget either the uncle's eye or his eye patch, its probing of the nephew's moodiness is even more relentless. A fixed stare is the first indication that he is nearing the edge of a nervous breakdown. As he slips into morbidity, Griffith employs eerie combinations of massed shadows and ghostly lights to convey the atmospherics of a tortured inner world. Seized at last by madness, the nephew strangles his uncle and immures his body in the brick wall of a fireplace, but all too soon the sweetness of revenge is overwhelmed by horrifying visitations, from the uncle's wandering ghost, from a suspicious detective whose tapping foot and tapping pencil have the appalling rhythm of a beating heart, from an apparition of the crucified Christ, and from a blazing tablet of the Law that says, "Thou Shalt Not Kill."

Moments after the nephew's attempt at suicide is thwarted by a posse of armed men who have come to arrest him, we learn that the nightmarish events we have witnessed have merely taken place in his mind, after he dozed off while reading "The Tell-Tale Heart." On awaking, he is greeted effusively by his remorseful uncle, who then makes amends with Annabel as well. The ceaseless war of the superego upon the id, the constant punishment of impulse by conscience, dissolves into a wish-fulfillment vision of harmony.

Ten years after *The Avenging Conscience* was released, Gilbert Seldes, in his survey of American popular culture, *The Seven Lively Arts*, would speak of the film in terms that suggested it was Griffith's greatest work. Although the judgment was extravagant, implicit in it was an important truth: Griffith's genius was better suited to psychological dramas than to such historical epics as *The Birth of a Nation*, to which he turned upon finishing *The Avenging Conscience*.

Ever since its release in 1912, an Italian film company had been raking in heavy profits at foreign box offices with a big-spectacle picture based on Henryk Sienkiewicz's novel *Quo Vadis?*. The twelve reels of *The Birth of a Nation* represented, first of all, an American answer to the Italians; secondly, a celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the American Civil War; thirdly, the belief of a Kentucky-born director that the United States had not truly become a nation until the overthrow of Reconstruction in the South; and lastly, the dream of a cinematic messiah that by dramatizing the horrors of the battlefield he could inspire a world convulsed by war to lay down its arms.

The movie cost close to $100,000—an unprecedented sum—to produce, and the money bought a lot, including a cast of hundreds of men, women, and children; color tints in an extensive variety of hues that were painstakingly applied to different sections of the filmstrip in order to enhance certain emotional values; and a musical score arranged both for the full orchestras that played in the grander movie houses of the time and for the solitary pianists who worked in most of the rest. This score was made up not only of such American tunes as "Turkey in the Straw" and "Camptown Races," but of excerpts from Schumann, Wagner, Grieg, and half a dozen other European composers. While the movie's richly disparate materials raised the danger of incoherence, they in fact were wondrously well coordinated by Griffith, even in such complicated scenes as the battle of Petersburg and the burning of Atlanta. He was masterful, too, in establishing narrative connections in the sprawling drama through poignant contrasts, of which the most moving begins with the

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departure in 1861 of a Confederate cavalry troop (headed by Colonel Ben Cameron) down a village street lined by crowds of white people and slaves laughing and cheering, while the music swells with the strains of "Dixie," and terminates with Cameron's return to the silence of that same street four years later, on foot, alone, and barely recovered from grievous wounds.

The Birth of a Nation is also one of the few dramatic movies ever made that contains scholarly footnotes. The citations on its subtitle cards range from Woodrow Wilson's *History of the American People* to Horace Porter's *Campaigning with Grant* to Civil War and post–Civil War pictorial documents. Nevertheless, as a historical epic the movie is intellectually and artistically inadequate. It does not offer sympathetic insights into the physical and mental suffering of the slaves or their dreams of freedom. In turning Lincoln into a Christ figure, it shuts off the possibility of explaining his part in precipitating and sustaining a bloody conflict. It ascribes the pursuit of legal equality for blacks by Congressman Thaddeus Stevens (thinly disguised as "Master of the Congress" Austin Stoneman) to his vulnerability to the seductive wiles of the sexual tiger cat who is his mulatto housekeeper. And the justly famous ride to the rescue by the hooded horsemen of the Ku Klux Klan—excitingly intercut with scenes of social chaos and personal danger in the Cameron family's hometown of Piedmont, South Carolina—is not shadowed by even the slightest hint of moral ambiguity.

Griffith's shortcomings as a historian, however, were not what made *The Birth of a Nation* the focus of the most furious controversy about a work of the American imagination since the publication of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. The controversy was a consequence, rather, of Griffith's everlasting need to produce paradigms of his conflicted feelings about women. An abhorrence of miscegenation merely served to intensify a familiar contrast in his work; this time, the opposite of lofty-mindedness would be a subhuman baseness, not far removed from Poe's evocation of the razor-wielding black ourang-outang in "The Murders in the Rue Morgue."

For the heroic role of Colonel Ben Cameron, Griffith chose a most unlikely candidate, Henry Walthall. Although it proved possible to mask the ravages of dissipation in his face with heavy applications of powder, his short stature could not be concealed, so the best of a bad bargain was made by acknowledging it with a nickname, "the little Colonel." But if the choice of Walthall was odd from the point of view of epical plausibility, a Poe look-alike was eminently suited to the phobic episodes of sexual persecution that Griffith had in mind. And another effect of his obsession with sex on his cast selections is that the most vivid performers in a picture filled with masculine derring-do are two young women, Mae Marsh and Lillian Gish.

Eighteen and seventeen years old, respectively, at the time the filming began, Marsh and Gish both were involved with Griffith off the set as well as on. Neither actress offered the pneumatic bliss of Blanche Sweet, but this was to their advantage, for Griffith preferred girl-women with slightly formed figures and an abundance of nervous energy. His ideal of the feminine film star, he told an interviewer for *Photoplay*, had "nothing of the flesh, nothing of the note of sensuousness," and he added that he liked "the nervous type."

Marsh projected a coltish, tomboyish innocence that reminded Griffith of one of the sisters whose collective pampering of him had eased the emotional desolation of his childhood. In *The Birth of a Nation*, the scenario of which was co-authored by Griffith and which departs substantially from the Thomas Dixon novel it is derived from, he assigned Marsh to play a character who does not exist in the novel, Ben Cameron's blonde-haired little sister, Flora. "You remind me so very much of my little sister," he told her. "You are a little sister." In the most arresting of the secondary dramas in the movie, the intimacy between Ben and Flora veers close to the edge of kinkiness. She hugs and nuzzles him and dances about him, her thin legs flashing; after he goes off to war, it is not to his mother or father or other sister that he writes, but to Flora, who dons her last good dress before opening his letter, swings her legs back and forth across her body as she reads it, and then places it in her bosom and pats the place where it is; upon his return home in 1865, Flora alone comes outside to meet him, wearing a dress pathetically adorned with strips of raw cotton, and Ben reaches out his hand and touches the strip on her bosom. By imposing upon Ben and Flora a fond fantasy of his own about brother-sister relations, Griffith set up

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his audiences for the horror of their final moment together.

In Lillian Gish, a Kentucky Galahad found a spiritual icon come to life, and in picture after picture he paid tribute to the purity of her beauty in ever more prolonged and searching close-ups of her luminous, transparently complexioned face. "I followed [Griffith's] work with intense interest," the great French director Jean Renoir has written. "The marvel of marvels was the close-up. I have never changed my opinion of this. Certain close-ups of Lillian Gish . . . are imprinted on my memory for life."

The silent-film star Colleen Moore has testified that Gish once confided in her that Griffith had asked her to marry him. His love for her, however, never halted his hunt for other women. Underlying the concupiscence of that hunt, moreover, was a fear of his quarries. "He admired and loved women," Lillian Gish has written, "yet he seemed afraid of them. He never saw a girl in his office without a third person present. . . . Hollywood was already filled with ambitious girls who would stop at nothing to get into films. Some unscrupulous young girls, having obtained an interview with a producer, would threaten to remove their clothes and accuse him of rape if he didn't promise them a role in a movie." But while Griffith took steps to avoid being forced to resort to such promises, he had no compunctions about dangling jobs before women in order to assert his control of them. Thus he was wont to humiliate Gish and other actresses who worked for him by creating uncertainties in their minds about whether they would get the parts they coveted. And when such ambitious performers as Mary Pickford announced that they were leaving his employ, he reacted so passively as to suggest that he secretly dreaded being engulfed by their demands on him and was relieved to see them go. The fear that women might victimize him was also kept secret in the movies he made; instead, he portrayed the victimization of women by men, and the terrific power with which he did so reached its peak in his work with Gish, for with her fugitive hands, facial mobility, and agitated body gestures, she could communicate every iota of the vulnerability he was seeking to dramatize.

In *Birth of a Nation,* he placed both Marsh and Gish in situations of sexual terror; indeed, in Marsh's case it involved attempted rape, which he no longer felt constrained to present symbolically. For in 1913, the producer-director George L. Tucker had brought out a picture called *Traffic in Souls,* based on the Rockefeller Commission's findings about white-slave rings in New York City. By this means the theme of sexual violation finally came to the American screen, and the astonishing financial success of *Traffic in Souls* gave Griffith the latitude to deal with it in his own way.

Three characters figure in the rape scene: tomboyish Flora Cameron, her brother Ben, and a low-caste black man named Gus, played in black face by a white actor of no renown, whom Griffith required to walk and run in a crouched-down way that resembled the scuttling of an animal. In a superbly edited sequence of shots, we witness the terrified Flora fleeing through sun-dappled woods from the onrushing Gus, whose foam-specked lips betray his sexual heat. Far in the rear but running hard as well is Ben, his face contorted with concern. He hopes to reach the black man before his sister is harmed, but his hopes are in vain. On the edge of a cliff, Gus closes in on Flora, who leaps to her death just as he is about to touch her. The scene ends at the foot of the cliff with the anguished Ben bent over his little sister's crumpled form.

In Gish's terror scene—which has no counterpart in Dixon's novel—the eye of the camera is mainly fixed on two characters: a young visitor to the South from Pennsylvania, Congressman Stoneman's ethereally ash-blonde daughter, Elsie, played by Gish, and the mulatto lieutenant governor of South Carolina, Silas Lynch, played by a swarthily made-up white actor, George Siegmann, a man of gorilla-like bulk. The town of Piedmont is falling into anarchy under the riotous sway of Negro militia, and in the midst of its breakdown Elsie is cornered by Lynch in a small room. He kisses the hem of her dress and asks her to marry him. Horrified, Elsie dodges away, her hands fluttering, but Lynch nabs her again. One of his black henchmen enters the room, and Lynch orders him to hurry preparations for a forced marriage. Lynch's lascivious closeness becomes so unbearable to Elsie that she faints. Lynch sweeps her up in his huge arms, gorilla-fashion—so Lillian Gish would later describe the way she was held—and carries her into an inner room; as he does so, her hair becomes unpinned and falls loose.

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(That particular image of beauty and the beast would return to the screen eighteen years later, in a shot of King Kong and Fay Wray.) After depositing Elsie in a chair, Lynch instructs his orderlies to keep her under guard. The camera cuts to a picture of salvation: units of white-robed Klansmen on horseback, assembling in the countryside for a ride to the rescue of Elsie and other threatened townsfolk. The leader of the ride will be Ben Cameron, who has fallen in love with Elsie.

It was these two scenes that aroused massive rage against the film. The entire Negro population of the United States, cried the urban reformer Frederic C. Howe, has been "degraded" by Griffith's portrayal of Negroes as "lustful" and "depraved"; and the mayor of New York, John Purroy Mitchell, alarmed by mounting social tension in the city, persuaded the manager of the Liberty Theater, where *The Birth of a Nation* was playing, to censor both scenes. In Boston, a group of militant protesters, led by the black newspaper editor William Monroe Trotter, threw stink bombs at the screen during Flora's flight through the woods. At the end of the show, fist fights between whites and blacks broke out in front of the theater and arrests were made. Emerging from the police station after being booked, Trotter told reporters that the movie "will make white women afraid of Negroes and will have white men all stirred up on their account."

The outcry that he was a racist caused Griffith much suffering, Lillian Gish has written. At a public hearing about the movie in Boston, presided over by Mayor James Michael Curley, Griffith offered to give $10,000 to the national president of the NAACP, Moorfield Storey, if he could point to any episode in the picture that was false. But when Storey asked him to name the mulatto lieutenant governor of a Southern state who had tried to force a white woman to marry him, Griffith sat mute. How could he, after all, have explained that *he* was Silas Lynch and the foam-lipped black Gus as well?

The Birth of a Nation, Cecil B. De Mille would remember in 1948, "burst upon the world with atomic force." By the end of 1917, its earnings exceeded sixty million dollars, an all but incredible amount that would have been even higher had not unscrupulous exhibitors such as Louis B. Mayer of Haverhill, Massachusetts, underreported their receipts. Nevertheless, the picture was a tragedy for Griffith, and not merely because accusations of racism would hound him to his grave. It created among movie moguls and moviegoers alike expectations of historical grandeur in his future work, expectations that he, in his megalomania, was all too eager to meet. In the teeth, therefore, of his intellectual naïveté, he went on to make other epics. *Intolerance* appeared in 1916, fourteen reels long and breathtaking in places, but unfortunate in its attempt to encompass the fall of Babylon, episodes in the life of Christ, the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre, and industrial strife in modern America. In 1918, *Hearts of the World* followed, a World War I chronicle partly made in Britain with the cooperation of the British government and nauseatingly propagandistic about the beastly Huns. And in 1922 came the inadvertently self-parodying *Orphans of the Storm*, a laughably inaccurate rendition of the French Revolution made more laughable by an overlay of anti-Bolshevik parable and notable mainly because it marked Lillian Gish's final appearance as an actress for Griffith.

In the final weeks of 1918, Griffith turned away from the seductions of history and in eighteen days and nights of work made *Broken Blossoms*, based in part, but only in part, on Thomas Burke's short story "The Chink and the Child." For all of its lapses into Victorian sentimentality, its low-life tableaux, remarkable transitions of light and shadow and psychopathological outcome gave it the look and feel of some of the greatest pictures of the twenties.

Gish at the time of the filming was still the director's premier actress, but the imminent doom of their association was plain to see in his admiration for the much less talented Carol Dempster—just turned eighteen and his newest mistress. Very soon he would be assigning parts to Dempster that ought by rights to have been Gish's. But although he toyed with the idea, he did not deny Gish the role of the battered fifteen-year-old Lucy in *Broken Blossoms*. Lucy's nightmare relationship with her sadistic father, the boxer known as Battling Burrows, and her dream relationship with a youthfully sensitive Yellow Man contained opportunities for dramatizing how he felt about Gish that were simply too rich for Griffith to pass by, and Gish herself rose to the challenge of the material by giving what she

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always would regard as her finest performance for him.

As the movie opens, the Yellow Man is preparing to leave China in order to carry Buddha's "glorious message of peace to the barbarian Anglo-Saxons, sons of turmoil and strife." It is an ambition that recalls the idealism of a young man out of Kentucky who believed that he could make the art of the movies serve the cause of universal peace. The sordid realities of life in the Limehouse district of London prove to be impervious, however, to the Yellow Man's plans, and he retreats into opium-intoxicated reveries. In a characteristic pose, he stands outside his small shop, leaning against the wall with his back curved and his arms wrapped around his body in a lonely self-protective embrace. Yet if his gaze often appears to be directed inward, he also is stirred by the sight in his neighborhood of the poignant figure of Lucy Burrows.

Lucy has been raised by Battling Burrows from the time she was a baby, when one of the many women in the boxer's life thrust her into his arms and disappeared. A swaggering bully with a taste for strong drink, Burrows makes Lucy wait on him slavishly, beats her with a whip, and constantly makes threatening gestures in her direction, for her jitteriness acts like a sadomasochistic come-on, inflaming him further. In her moments alone, it becomes clear that she is still a little girl who yearns for her lost mother. Yet she is not dreaming of a traditional woman's role for herself, because a housewife burdened with a large family of children has warned her against such a fate, and even prostitutes have advised her not to follow in their footsteps. Unable to define the liberation she wants, she merely lives from day to day, in the fear that at some point her father's temper will explode cataclysmically—and finally it does.

Faint with pain from a truly ferocious beating, Lucy staggers away and at last collapses in the Yellow Man's shop. He daubs her wounded shoulder with a cloth and impulsively leans forward to kiss her, but withdraws when she offers no sign of consent. Upstairs in an apartment crammed with Oriental bric-a-brac, he wins her wide-eyed gratitude by dressing her in a Chinese robe, giving her a doll to play with, and placing her in his bed. The erotics of voyeurism have taken many notable forms in the movies; this scene is one of them. To begin with, Griffith enlisted the talents of a special-effects cameraman, Hendrik Sartov. Sartov worked with a single-element lens that was full of the aberrations of glasswork. But if stopped down to a certain point, the aberrations not only created a soft focus that eliminated facial wrinkles, but cast an enchanting sparkle on catch lights in the eyes and on the lips. With the camera close in upon her, Lucy's face is a white blossom, irradiated with light. Ravished by her beauty, the Yellow Man leans forward once more to kiss her, only to restrain himself again with an enormous effort. At the same time that *Broken Blossoms* is a plea for international love and understanding, it defines racial difference as a gulf that the Yellow Man cannot bridge.

When informed of Lucy's presence in the Yellow Man's apartment, her father flies into a jealous rage, filling the air with racial epithets. This reaction and those that follow it expose the sexual pathology inherent in his sadism. He goes to the apartment and finds his daughter there alone. The camera shifts back and forth from his glowering face to the terror-stricken Lucy's. He smashes every Oriental object within reach, orders Lucy to put on her old clothes, and force-marches her home. At once he makes clear that he intends to beat her. Lucy runs into a closet and locks the door. The ensuing scene of assault on a young female in an enclosed space looks back to Griffith's suspense thrillers and forward, as Andrew Sarris has observed, to two homages to it from Alfred Hitchcock—Anthony Perkins's murderous strike at Janet Leigh through the translucent shower curtain in *Psycho* and the entrapment of Tippi Hedren in an outdoor phone booth in *The Birds*. As Burrows pounds on the door and shakes the handle, Lucy's agitation becomes almost unbearable to watch. Around and around and around she whirls in a vortex of hysteria, her arms thrashing wildly and her eyes huge. Burrows next attacks the closet with a hatchet. Back inside again, the camera shows us the hatchet blade biting through the wood. At last, Burrows breaks down the door, drags Lucy out, and flings her on a bed. Just for a few seconds, the tempo slows. Quite deliberately, he picks up his whip and oh! so gently taps it several times against her forehead. Then he beats her to death. As the camera cuts away, he is falling upon her, his arm flailing.

His own death, and the Yellow Man's, fol-

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low in quick succession. Having discovered the ruination of his shop, the Yellow Man rushes to the boxer's home and finds Lucy's body. Burrows threatens him with his hatchet, but the Yellow Man kills him with a burst of pistol shots. Back in his apartment, the Yellow Man adorns the dead Lucy in a Chinese gown and ceremonially stabs himself to death.

Was such a grim movie doomed to fail with the American public? Griffith was willing to gamble that the audience for movies was now so large that he could profitably pursue a fragment of it. Therefore, he marketed *Broken Blossoms* as an art film that would interest an elite. The New York premiere was staged in a plush legitimate playhouse, the George M. Cohan Theater, and the normal admission price to a first-run movie was tripled. A Russian balalaika orchestra was engaged to play the score of the film, apparently because its instruments made Asiatic sounds. The Cohan Theater was decorated with Chinese ornaments and Chinese costumes were provided to the ushers. Finally, a choreographer was commissioned to create a dance prologue in which a symbolic version of the movie was enacted and Griffith's mistress, Carol Dempster, was cast as the lead dancer. Well-dressed first-nighters packed the playhouse, and the major reviewers loved the movie. "A masterpiece in motion pictures," said the man from the *New York Times*, surpassing "anything hitherto seen on the screen in beauty and dramatic force." In the end, the picture returned $700,000 on an investment of $80,000.

An unusually articulate cameraman, Karl Brown, who worked for Griffith for many years, once said of the characters in *Broken Blossoms* that "they were the creatures of a poetic imagination that had at very long last found its outlet in its own way in its own terms." The result was a haunting fantasy of domination and terror, supplemented by an unforgettable portrait of an alien's emotional repression. That the object of the passions of the two men in the movie is an innocent child of fifteen—the very same age, of course, of Lillian Gish at the time of her first arrival at the Biograph studios—illustrates once again Griffith's dualism about young women. On the one hand, he was obsessed with their sexual allure; on the other hand, he had a Victorian wish to exalt them as morally pure. Directors in the twenties both at home and abroad—von Stroheim, for instance, and von Sternberg, and G. W. Pabst—would dramatize sexual dynamics in ways that were predicated upon a far more sophisticated understanding of feminine cynicism and indifference than Griffith ever displayed. Nevertheless, D. W. Griffith's vision led to theirs. Lucy's submission to the sick cruelties of a jealous father would flower in time into the pitiless triumphs of Lulu in *Pandora's Box* and of Lola in *The Blue Angel* over older men maddened by desire.

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Research in the Soviet Union Under Glasnost

THEOPHILUS C. PROUSIS

I will never forget the mandatory AIDS test I took in the clinic at Leningrad State University. Long lines in the dark corridor, paint peeling off the walls, thick dust on the unwashed floor, and contradictory instructions from young nurses in long white coats all made the ordeal a time for reflection. Did I make the right decision coming to the Soviet Union? Was I sufficiently steeled for the realities of Soviet life? Upon arrival in Leningrad in September 1987, our group, consisting of four exchange scholars embarking on a nine-month research trip, was tested under the guidelines of a new Soviet law instituting mandatory AIDS testing for all foreigners who were not tourists. I worried because of reports of high false-positive rates in Soviet testing procedures. My anxiety intensified when I learned that Soviet doctors frequently used the same needle more than once. Armed with our own needles procured from an American doctor at the U.S. consulate, we survived the test. Since I never heard anything from the clinic, I presumably passed.

The AIDS test set the tone for my year in the Soviet Union. It was one of many obstacles, both expected and unexpected, that had to be endured with a sense of humor and a sense of perspective. It underscored the importance of preparing myself as much as possible to confront these obstacles on my own terms. The episode also provided insight into the somewhat less than efficient workings of a cumbersome Soviet bureaucracy. Above all, exposure to Soviet medical practice reinforced one of my basic goals for the year: stay healthy and out of Soviet clinics.

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I spent the 1987–88 academic year in the USSR with a grant from the International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX) to conduct historical research in Soviet archives and libraries. IREX, with government, corporate, and foundation support, administers research exchange programs with the Soviet Union and the socialist countries of Eastern Europe in the fields of the social sciences and the humanities. I had been in the USSR during 1980 and 1981, at a time when East-West tensions were high as a result of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, President Carter's grain embargo and boycott of the Moscow Olympics, and the Solidarity movement in Poland. On that visit, when I was a graduate student at the University of Minnesota, my IREX grant allowed me to research my dissertation on Russian public responses to the Greek Revolution of the 1820s. On this recent trip, at a time when East-West tensions had thawed, I had the opportunity to note the effects of General Secretary Gorbachev's policy of glasnost, or openness, on Western scholars in the Soviet Union.

Leningrad, where I conducted most of my research, brings to mind the national classics of Pushkin, Gogol, and Dostoyevski. It is unlike any other city in the Soviet Union. Leningrad charms and fascinates because of its blend of Russian and Western European architecture, its prominence as the capital of the czarist empire, and its position as the birthplace of modern Russian culture and the epicenter of revolution. But on this trip I would be able to observe how effectively Gorbachev could blend Soviet realities and Western ideas. When I arrived in Leningrad, my immediate goal was to establish an efficient work routine as soon as possible. I was convinced, based on my previous experience,

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that devising a daily and weekly rhythm was the best way I could cope with Soviet realities. As much as I had prepared myself for the second trip, I discovered that some things in the Soviet Union do not change, glasnost or no glasnost: adjusting to Soviet life is still a jarring experience demanding time and patience.

For example, I shared a ten-by-twelve-foot dormitory room with Vasilii, a sleepy-eyed, scrawny, and unkempt Soviet graduate student of linguistics and French. He had to get the approval of a Party commission for the honor, or task, of sharing a room with a Westerner. While I doubt he was actually *paid* to watch me, Vasilii had the responsibility of finding out as much as he could about my activities in the Soviet Union. He seemed particularly interested in the identity of my Soviet friends and acquaintances and the nature of my relations with them. I had the uncomfortable feeling that I was living with a spy. Except, of course, I was supposed to be the spy.

Vasilii had an unobtrusive approach to monitoring me. He never pestered me with questions about my comings and goings and never, to my knowledge, tampered with my belongings, notes, or mail. I was generally discreet in our conversations, parrying his comments with safe remarks about my research and the well-preserved historical landmarks of his beloved Leningrad. We were able to develop a reasonably cordial relationship despite his dogmatic party-line stance on most issues, such as his belief that United States news coverage of the USSR was saturated with anti-Soviet propaganda and misinformation. Vasilii was genuinely curious about American life, especially consumer goods, plying me with questions about the cost and availability of cars, stereos, televisions, computers, even cigarettes, which he smoked in the stairwell because smoking was prohibited in the room. What most annoyed me about Vasilii was his almost constant presence. He became such a fixture in the room, reading French mystery novels and loudly playing Phil Collins, Billy Joel, and Edith Piaf tapes, that my daily rhythm seemed a bit out of sync the few times he went to Volgograd to visit his wife, two children, and parents.

We lived on the fifth floor of a light gray, nondescript, five-story dormitory without an elevator. Each floor had communal kitchen and washroom facilities, but the two communal phones and the only showers were on the first floor. Life in Club Len, the name Westerners affectionately gave to this dreary place, had many austere and, to Americans, unusual aspects. Take, for example, my key. It was in fact *our* key—Vasilii's and mine. Because there was only one key per room, whoever left last (usually Vasilii) deposited it at a glass-enclosed office on the first floor; whoever returned first (usually Vasilii) retrieved it. Sometimes I wondered if he ever went out. The keys had very little to do with privacy or protection of private property, as I came to learn. My key opened almost every room in the building. Sometimes my key opened every room *but* mine. If privacy was non-existent at Club Len, so too was sanitation. Monday was "sanitary day," a day when the shower room was locked for cleaning and sanitizing. From what I could gather the next day, sanitizing had simply consisted of opening the windows and letting the drafty air circulate.

Life in Club Len also had its endearing aspects that provided vivid insight into Soviet life. The dormitory was located in what was chiefly a working-class neighborhood, the scene of barricades in 1905 and 1917. The area's drab apartment blocks and dirty snow stood in sharp contrast to the magical Leningrad of the Neva Embankment, the Bronze Horseman, and Rastrelli's Winter Palace. The stores and shops around Club Len featured the standard Soviet three-line shopping system: one line to select an item (say, a loaf of bread), another to pay the cashier, and a third to exchange the receipt for the now-packaged item. Deep puddles of thick mud and slush near the doors added an extra hurdle to the three-line endurance contest. Some of the longest shopping lines were for sugar, a result of Gorbachev's anti-alcohol campaign. Whereas in 1980 I had often brought a bottle of wine to the homes of Soviet friends, in 1988 a thoughtful guest would bring a three-pound bag of sugar. Sugar became scarce in state stores because it was purchased in bulk quantities for illegal home-distilled spirits. The people responded by turning the endemic shortages of basic consumer items into jokes. For example—What would happen if the Soviet Union acquired the Sahara Desert? Answer: In a few years, sand would be in short supply.

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One of my favorite places in the neighborhood was the Smolensk cemetery, a heavily wooded area with two small picturesque Russian churches. The cemetery was an island of serenity, not just for the departed, but for the living as well. Many people strolled along the birch-lined paths, quietly chatting, while others went cross-country skiing. Jogging here each morning, I discovered the Polar Bear Club, whose members ran bare-chested during the winter, even with the temperature at fifteen below.

Our neighborhood had other advantages as well. Absent were the aggressive black marketeers who prey upon Westerners in the center of the city, especially near major hotels and on Nevskii Prospekt. With my monthly stipend of 380 rubles (about $500), I had more than enough rubles to live on and, thus, no need to exchange dollars for rubles at black-market rates well above the official one. Astonished by the extremely lucrative rates of currency exchange on the black market, I was often reminded of the Soviet joke: In Soviet economics, the relationship between the ruble, the dollar, and the pound is constant. A pound of rubles is always equal to a dollar. When approached by black marketeers on Nevskii Prospekt, in self-defense I pretended to be deaf, a strategy that usually confused the hustlers. On other occasions, I played along, telling them I could get better deals from their competitors across the street. An American colleague had still another effective technique: he recited e. e. cummings's poems to them. I always felt a sense of relief walking the quiet streets in the area of the dormitory because I knew I did not have to face that army of black marketeers.

Having coffee every morning at a local shop near the dorm gave me a sense of working-class attitudes toward perestroika, Gorbachev's effort to restructure the economy and bureaucracy. Whenever the plump, middle-aged woman serving coffee heard excerpts from Gorbachev's speeches on the morning news, urging citizens to work longer and harder for the good of the country, she responded by shouting at the radio that people like herself had worked hard all their lives and that Gorbachev and Raisa were out of touch with the average working man and woman. Conversations with Vasilii and other graduate students provided still a different slant on public opinion. They generally supported the reform initiatives, in particular the liberalizing effects of glasnost on the intellectual and cultural life and on the historical reinterpretation of the Stalin era. Articles in the press, films like *Repentance*, and novels like Anatoli Rybakov's *Children of the Arbat* depicted the abuses of power under Stalin more candidly and truthfully than anything produced during the Brezhnev era.

Adjusting to life with Vasilii in Club Len and its environs came with time, perseverance, and no little flexibility on my part. Within several weeks, I started to feel as though I belonged, a feeling dramatically reinforced late that December. When the U.S. Press and Cultural Affairs Attaché and his wife went to Helsinki for a few days before Christmas, they asked me to house-sit in their sprawling five-room apartment on Gogol Street, adjoining the bustling and glitzy Nevskii Prospekt in the heart of Leningrad. From their apartment windows I gazed upon a steady stream of people trudging back and forth in snow, sleet, and slush, carrying string bags and packages with objects bulging in all directions, much like the multi-shaped domes on St. Basil's in Red Square. People were also standing in lines for Soviet New Year's cards, colorful and vibrant with scenes from Russian fairy tales and folk legends for this festive season when Father Frost becomes the Soviet version of Santa Claus.

Inside the apartment, I was ensconced with two cats, a decorated Christmas tree, a VCR, several stereo systems with a wide selection of tapes and records, and numerous well-stocked shelves of novels, historical works, and art books from all over the world. By far the most precious and treasured items were the washer and dryer, the first I had seen since my arrival in Peter the Great's "Window to the West." For two days I felt a million miles away from my reality of the past four months. But it turned out to be one of the most bizarre episodes of the year. The apartment, an island of Western life, and the dormitory, a living experience that bordered on a prolonged dreary camping trip, represented two completely different patterns of life. In fact, I was glad to return to Club Len and resume the daily rituals and routines of my Soviet life. For that, after all, was the real Soviet Union.

I was there to research Russian-Greek cultural relations and the Greek communities of Russia. Before I could begin, I had to com-

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plete several bureaucratic procedures at Leningrad State University, the institution where I was placed. Writing the research proposal loomed as the most vital step of this preparatory stage. In 1980, I regarded the proposal as yet another bureaucratic formality to be completed as quickly as possible in order to begin my research. In 1987, I fully realized that the proposal was an indispensable document, a passport into academic and research institutions. It signified my seriousness as a historian, something the Soviets deeply respect when it comes time to securing archival materials.

The art of crafting a good proposal requires a deft combination of the general and the specific. Besides addressing the specific research issues I intended to explore, my proposal had to be sufficiently broad to encompass tangential topics that developed during the course of the year. My proposal listed each specific archival and manuscript reference I would need and included the key phrase "and any other materials relevant to my work." This became a much-needed safety net for requesting sources not specifically cited. Had I not included this phrase, I would have been denied access to anything not explicitly listed. Flexibility, therefore, became a major consideration in preparing my research agenda.

After the research proposal was approved and signed by my Soviet adviser, a professor of nineteenth-century Russian history at Leningrad State University, I believed everything was in order and was eager to begin my work. But soon I was reminded that the most basic reality of Soviet life is to expect the unexpected because the unexpected generally happens. At the Manuscript Section of the Institute of Russian Literature, my placement papers had not been received or processed, while at the Central State Historical Archive and the Manuscript Section of the Saltykov-Shchedrin Library, my status was "pending approval from the Main Archival Administration in Moscow." With patience, persistence, innumerable calls on phones that did not always work, and several visits to crowded administrative offices, I was usually successful in overcoming this bureaucratic tug-of-war over archival access.

I initially considered this contest an endurance struggle of sorts, orchestrated by Soviet officials to test the seriousness and perseverance of Western scholars. It seemed carefully planned to coincide with the early weeks of my stay when I experienced all the frustrations and difficulties of adjusting to Soviet life. After two trips to the Soviet Union, I am now convinced that this confusion about access to archives results from a glacial bureaucracy that refuses to take initiative without permission from Moscow. Gorbachev's concerted effort to streamline and restructure this labyrinthine bureaucracy, while certainly laudable, has spawned even greater confusion and disorganization than before. Various departments and sectors are unsure about the security of their positions and the identity of their new superiors in the bureaucratic hierarchy. Thus, they tend to act more cautiously and tentatively than ever, awaiting explicit directives from Moscow, the hub of the bureaucracy.

During both research trips, I was denied permission to work at the Archive of Russian Foreign Policy in Moscow. Access to this institution has always been a problem for most Western scholars regardless of their research topics. Soviet officials have traditionally been sensitive about czarist and Soviet foreign policy materials, and if more than a select few Westerners can work at this particular archive, it will be one index of glasnost. On both research trips, I was also unable to work at the Manuscript Section of the Lenin Library in Moscow. Once I was denied access because a Soviet scholar was said to be examining the materials I requested. A second denial occurred because, I was told, no record of my placement papers had been processed. Because this archive was "undergoing restoration"—a common Soviet euphemism for an institution that is not functioning but isn't necessarily under restoration—it is likely that my placement documents were lost or misplaced. I did not press the issue because the holdings at this archive were tangentially related to my topic and I had enough other work to keep me occupied.

Most of my archival work was conducted in Leningrad, in particular at the Central State Historical Archive, the most important repository for historical research on nineteenth-century Russia. The Manuscript Section of the Institute of Russian Literature houses the richest manuscript collections of Pushkin, Tolstoy, and other great figures in Russian literature and culture. My status was initially uncertain because the university kept saying

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that they had no authorization from Moscow permitting me to work here; but when I went directly to this archive and presented a copy of my research proposal to the assistant director, he could not have been more cooperative. I began working within a few days—perhaps a measure of glasnost on the part of the assistant director. More significant, my proposal listed specific manuscript holdings in the archive and the names of Soviet specialists working there whom I wanted to meet. I was also able to work at the Manuscript Section of the Saltykov-Shchedrin Public Library, but I encountered difficulty obtaining permission to use all the materials I requested. In this particular case, my Soviet adviser tried unsuccessfully to obtain a release for some of these documents.

For several obvious reasons, I received access to far more archival sources on my recent trip than on my previous one. In addition to being more fluent in Russian, I now had my Ph.D. and a university teaching position, both of which enhanced my reputation with Soviet officials and scholars. Being more familiar with the living and working environment, and in particular with the ways to operate effectively within the Kafkaesque world of Soviet officialdom, I had a better sense of how to pursue my research objectives and how to maintain the good will and favorable disposition of key administrators at the university and the archives. Giving tokens of my appreciation on Soviet holidays, such as flowers, chocolates, or hard-to-find books like *Children of the Arbat*, helped solidify a good relationship with the appropriate officials.

Glasnost made a noticeable difference in the quantity and quality of research materials I received. It contributed to the more cordial and positive atmosphere in Soviet institutions, with most archivists and librarians displaying greater support, cooperation, and encouragement than I had found during 1980 and 1981. One measure of the change glasnost brings to American scholars is the greater opportunity to conduct research outside Moscow and Leningrad. In 1980–81, I was refused permission to work in the libraries and archives of Odessa, although that was crucial to my research. The reason bordered on the absurd: "Most of the city," I was informed, "was undergoing restoration." In 1988, the city being "open," I had approval to work in the regional historical archive of Odessa, one of the highlights of my research. The Odessa segment of my research became especially productive when I came across the personal papers of Dimitrios S. Inglezis, a prominent representative of the Greek community of Odessa in the first half of the nineteenth century. I have since incorporated this rich trove of information in an article on Inglezis, a merchant, city leader, and patriot of Odessa.

My schedule also took advantage of the new opportunities provided by glasnost. In the Central State Historical Archive, where I did most of my research, I established a good working relationship with my archival assistant, Natasha, with whom I had worked for six weeks in 1981. The organization of most Soviet archives does not allow Westerners to examine inventories of specific archival holdings, so Natasha became absolutely indispensable. I had to order materials through her, which entailed informing her about my topic and all related issues I wanted to investigate. Because I maintained regular hours at the archive and kept her abreast of my scheduled research trips to other cities, she provided a regular flow of very useful materials.

On several occasions when the official in the reading room left for a few minutes, I tried to examine the treasured archival inventories that Soviet scholars have the privilege of using. Frantically copying as many citations as possible before the return of the official, I realized that no matter how much material Natasha brought me, she was not forthcoming with all of the relevant files. By mid-year, and in return for several English to Russian translations that she asked me to do, she let me look at some of the inventories—a gold mine of information that enabled me to start new projects. Within the parameters of Soviet archival rules and regulations, Natasha proved to be a very capable, diligent, and pleasant assistant who made my research productive.

Working with unpublished sources is, of course, the very essence of the historian's craft. In the Soviet Union, its special circumstances have to be kept in mind. In nearly all cases, copying facilities for archival materials are extremely difficult to use. I needed special permission from both Natasha and the Main Archival Administration in Moscow, and limits were placed on what and how much could be copied. In libraries, I encountered less difficulty getting things photocopied or microfilmed, again with limitations on what and

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how much. But even here I had to secure permission from a desk clerk who, without even knowing my research interests, sometimes rejected my copy requests because they were "not related to my topic." On the whole, I found it more efficient to examine items and take detailed notes than to make copies for future reference. The time-consuming process of getting permission, the uncertainty of waiting for approved copy requests, and the generally poor quality of Soviet copies were the main reasons I used archival files as they were brought to my shelf. Then I could establish a momentum and begin to see connections between various issues. Using materials as they came in also gave me good leads for placing subsequent orders with Natasha.

Because my historical research concentrated on the pre-Soviet period, most of the archival documents and manuscripts I examined were handwritten, sometimes clearly in large well-scripted letters but more often illegibly in an almost undecipherable scrawl. Before going to the Soviet Union, I consulted several Soviet publications on reading Russian handwritten sources from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. That helped, but the initial weeks still proved to be a painstaking experience of trying to make out handwritten documents. With time, I began to see patterns and could put letters, words, and sentences together. Natasha and other assistants were also generous with their help in my efforts to decipher illegible writing. When, by chance, I encountered printed or typed archival items, I read them with such ease that I often wished I could change my topic.

I found I had to balance archival and library research. Most Soviet archives are open from 10 A.M. to 5:30 P.M., Monday through Friday, while libraries are generally open until 9 or 10 P.M., seven days a week, except for the numerous holidays such as Constitution Day on October 7, the anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution on November 7, International Women's Day on March 8, and May Day. All archives and libraries are closed one day of the month for "sanitary day," which allowed for such housekeeping chores as straightening the books on shelves and checking the lights. Several nights a week and one day on the weekend, I tried to do library work. Nineteenth-century Russian journals and periodicals constituted an excellent primary source; and I also took advantage of the wealth of secondary materials in Soviet libraries without having to wait for the inter-library loan process at my own school, the University of North Florida.

With the Soviet specialists in my area, I also discussed my work. They generally were cooperative, and we exchanged papers and offprints. Consultations with Soviet scholars not only enhanced my work but added a human dimension to it. After struggling through their articles and books as a graduate student on the banks of the Upper Mississippi, I found it rewarding to meet these scholars on the banks of the Neva and the Moskva. Because we had common research interests, they offered more useful assistance than my adviser by suggesting archival and manuscript collections I should keep in mind for future projects.

My work routines became more productive and efficient when I made time for relaxation and sight-seeing—visits to the countless historical sites, architectural landmarks, and Soviet artistic treasures. Soviet museums such as the Hermitage and the Armoury are eloquent testimonies to the richness and creative genius of Russian culture across the ages. I recall the first meeting with my adviser when, in response to my frustration at not being able to start archival work until authorization came from Moscow, he stressed the importance of visiting the Hermitage as often as possible. I am glad I followed his advice. Its unsurpassed collection of masterpiece paintings, its ornate interiors, and its majestic views of the Neva Embankment are dazzling. Even long walks to capture images of daily life, such as bundled children looking like puffy samovars, became a refreshing change of pace from work.

The three weeks I spent in Odessa highlighted the unpredictable twists and turns of Soviet life. On the three-hour flight departing from Leningrad at 7 A.M., I expected to be served tea or coffee, especially in view of the attractive cuisine depicted in the shiny Aeroflot posters, but nothing at all was served on our flight. On the return flight departing from Odessa at midnight after a four-hour delay, I looked forward to sleeping after the long wait. Seated between two friendly Soviet soldiers carrying guitars, I was the only foreigner on the overbooked flight. Any hope of catching some sleep was disrupted by the commotion of flight attendants rolling well-stocked food carts down the narrow aisle and serving all

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passengers a three-course meal that featured a variety of Soviet cheese and sausage. During my stay in Odessa, I slept in a spacious suite in a dormitory near the shores of the Black Sea. After months of communal showers and washrooms, I now had private facilities, but the hot water pipes did not work for the first several days. Such are the vicissitudes of Soviet life.

Near the end of my stay, I forgot the main lesson of life in the Soviet Union and expected things to go as I had planned. For several weeks before my departure from Leningrad, I had been saving rubles to pay the exorbitant fees assessed by Soviet officials on baggage in excess of forty pounds. To my surprise, I was not charged when my baggage tipped the scales at almost seventy pounds. At customs inspection, I then had to explain why I had so many rubles. It is illegal to take rubles out of the country, and I could not exchange them for dollars because I had received a ruble stipend. At that point, I really did not care what happened to the Monopoly-like Soviet money I had and offered them to the customs inspector. After refusing, she took the rubles to a coffee shop in the waiting room and bought several bottles of highly priced Soviet champagne and French cognac. She then stuffed them in my carry-on bags and ordered that I distribute them as gifts to family and friends. She did her job. I had no more rubles, and I departed not only in but with better spirits than the other scholars.

John Clive

1924–1990

Contributor, THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

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My Aunt Gives Me A Clarinet Lesson

GREGORY DJANIKIAN

"Play," my aunt said, "*pianissimo.*"
I blew out toots and squeaks, filled the kitchen
With caterwauls, monkeys, pigs,
There was a menagerie, there were jungles.
"Why not the cello," she said, "why not drums."
"Zookeeper," my uncle said, "game warden."

I blew out ostriches, catbirds, snow geese.
"Silly boy," she said, creasing
The pages of the lesson book
"Take the gum out of your mouth,
Don't blow so hard."

There were frogs at my feet,
Boat-tailed grackles perched on the towel rack.

I could hear my cousins playing Ping-Pong in the cellar,
There was the *tick tick* of the oven baking bread,
And wasn't that Freddy Petrie outside
Under the maple, swinging easily on a rope
And making the branch creak?

How many metronomes there were!
"Begin again," my aunt said, "restrain,"
And snapped her fingers next to my ear.
Two mules, I counted. Three cows.

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Where was Benny Goodman? Dixieland?
Which house were all the saints marching in?
Farewell, Carnegie Hall, I thought. Good-bye,
Pierson Elementary School Band. So long,
Janice Reutlinger who played the tuba.

There was a yak lowing in the doorway.
"Domesticate," my aunt said, "refine."
Freddy Petrie was riding a wild donkey
Along the blackberry bushes, waving and smiling.
The maple was becoming dangerous and colorful.
Hippopotami had come.
Soon there'd be phalaropes, merinos.

"Sonority!" my aunt cried out. "Sonority!"
And ducks. There were lots of ducks.

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You Never Knew

MARK MADIGAN

I was there in the shadows
  of the small auditorium
    listening to the quick trills

while you practiced Bach.
  Hired for the day,
    to clip thick branches

to the shrubbery's design,
  I'd come in only
    to draw one draught

from the porcelain fountain,
  to rinse out saltwater
    pooled in the eyes,

and sit, for a moment,
  in the cold air.
    But hearing those notes,

and all your soft,
  encouraging talk—
    C'mon, be careful,

c'mon c'mon—
  as streaming sweat pearls
    cooled on my brow,

or soaked cold crescents
  into my shirt,
    I knew for the first time

the pleasure in work,
  how love echoes out
    from inanimate objects.

✪ MARK MADIGAN teaches English at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. His poetry has appeared in *California Quarterly, Kansas Quarterly, Poetry,* and several other journals. He is currently at work on his first collection of poems, *Visible Music.*

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Malthus

The Reactionary Reformer

WILLIAM PETERSEN

T. R. Malthus wrote two books, *An Essay on the Principle of Population* and *Principles of Political Economy*, either of which should have assured him an honored place in the history of Western thought. The *Essay* marked the beginning of modern demography, and *Principles* spelled out an alternative theory that no less an economist than John Maynard Keynes considered far better than Ricardian orthodoxy. Yet Malthus's reputation is—or, perhaps better, has been until very recently—far below that of many lesser men. So many myths proliferated about his personal life that this kindly and rather conventional professor in a provincial college emerged as an ogre, intent on doing evil to his world and ours. But after many decades when neither the man nor his works were given their due, a long-delayed reappraisal is in process.

Malthus lived from 1766 to 1834. This was a time much like our own, when the high hopes that culminated in the French (or Russian) revolution divided succeeding generations between the hostile or disillusioned and the continuing faithful or at least tolerant. The first edition of the *Essay*, published anonymously in 1798, was directed (as we are informed in the subtitle) against "the speculations of Mr. Godwin, M. Condorcet, and other writers" of utopian tracts. Its thesis was simple. If the anticipated perfect society comes into being and totally abolishes poverty, misery, and vice, the result will be a population growth faster than any possible increase in subsistence, with a consequent reappearance of poverty, misery, and vice. Improvements in man's condition are limited, in other words, by his relation to the resources available to him.

Like any other utopian (or totalitarian—the two types overlap at many points), William Godwin was not inclined to accept limits of any kind to the working of his imagined society. Population pressure was hardly an imminent problem. "Myriads of centuries of still increasing population may pass away," he had averred in his *Political Justice*, "and the earth be yet found sufficient for the support of its inhabitants." In the remote future, when a zero rate of population growth would become necessary, this would be realized in a world without either births or deaths. For as people become more cultivated and virtuous, they will be less and less eager to gratify the senses, until ultimately they will cease altogether to propagate. And this dissipation of the sexual urge will be balanced by a total conquest of death, brought about not, as in others' speculations, by improvements in medical arts, but by "the immediate and unavoidable operation of an improved intellect." In that lovely land over the horizon, "the whole will be a people of men, and not of children. Generation will not succeed generation, nor truth have, in a certain degree, to recommence her career every thirty years." Whatever criticisms one may have of Malthus's initial statement of his principle of population, one should keep in mind the theory that he was opposing.

Meetings between the two men, Malthus, an unknown of thirty-two, and Godwin, who at forty-two was at the height of his fame, led to an amicable agreement to seek a reconcili-

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ation of their views. Godwin would drop the word *perfectibility* (though hardly the concept), and he admitted at least to his diary that one could not presume human behavior to be wholly rational. And Malthus, partly responding to Godwin's critique, partly reworking his theory with empirical data drawn from history, ethnology, and materials that he had gathered on trips to Norway and other countries, wrote in effect a new book. Five years after the first edition of the *Essay*, the second was four times longer; it was a reasoned argument from evidence rather than a bare statement of the probable sequence of events. Most fundamentally, Malthus supplemented such "positive checks" to population growth as destitution and whoring with the "preventive check" of "moral restraint," or the postponement of marriage until the man was able to support a wife and children. In this revised schema, deceleration in a deleterious increase in numbers could be effected by a lower birth rate as well as, or even rather than, by a higher death rate. Moreover, in the succeeding editions of the *Essay*, Malthus focused more and more on how social institutions could be adjusted to instill an ethic of parental accountability among those who propagated irresponsibly.

Malthus, remembered mainly as a demographer, is also memorable as an economist. He agreed with most of the classic principles, in particular with the axiom that regulation by the state typically represents control by one special interest over the rest of the population. He argued affably and at great length with David Ricardo, the main source of the orthodox position, especially over what is known as Say's law—that the supply of goods creates its own demand. Payment for all of the factors in production—the costs of raw materials, wages, rent, interest, profit, and so on—furnishes potential purchasers with precisely enough to buy the goods produced. Entrepreneurs who offer commodities in amounts, or of types, not wanted by consumers have their poor judgment corrected by the market, for low profits induce them to cease making unwanted goods and to shift to those with an attractive rate of profit, reflecting the high demand relative to the short supply. But by its very nature the system cannot generate an overproduction across the board, a "general glut," as it was then called. As the crux of Malthus's criticism of this orthodox position, he challenged the premise that human wants are immediately and indefinitely expansible. "It is a most important error to take for granted that mankind will produce and consume all that they have the power to produce and consume, and will never prefer indolence to the rewards of industry." It would lead us astray to review here all the disputes about "overproduction" and "underconsumption"; still today, there is seemingly no risk of a consensus on any of the principal points. It is enough to note that Malthus was one of the first to spell out the theory and its implications.

I

Both the *Essay* and the *Principles* enunciated propositions that challenged widely held tenets, and it was not surprising that Malthus was attacked. It is disheartening, however, that so much of the opposition consisted in ill-informed malice, that many who assaulted Malthus and his ideas obviously did not bother to become acquainted with either. As history has so often demonstrated, if a serious scholar's work is attacked by a novelist, a poet, or a professor, hardly anyone asks for the credentials of intellectuals who proclaim themselves universal experts. That Malthus's theories pertained not only to life and death but also to the rich and the poor has always invited comment from homilists, whose invective then became part of professional or quasi-professional tracts.

Malthus was manifestly staid in his life and behavior. To so well advertised a libertine as Byron, what he termed Malthus's "eleventh commandment, 'Thou shalt not marry, unless *well*,'" was "turning marriage into arithmetic." In Shelley's words Malthus was "a eunuch and a tyrant" and "the apostle of the rich"; and to suggest that anyone should exercise a sense of responsibility in begetting showed a "hardened insolence." "The stupid ignorance of the man," Coleridge exclaimed in response to Malthus's intimation that annexing others' land for emigrants might be morally questionable; for Coleridge, it was not "immoral to kill a few Savages in order to get possession of a country capable of sustaining a thousand times as many enlightened and happy men." Although Robert Southey held that "the laboring classes have a natural ten-

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dency to increase faster than the higher ranks," because "celibacy is much less frequent among them," he characterized similar statements by Malthus as "rubbish." In William Hazlitt's view, Malthus's *Essay* was "the most complete specimen of illogical, crude, and contradictory reasoning that perhaps was ever offered to the notice of the public." William Cobbett, originally convinced that the principle of population is "a doctrine which can never be shaken," subsequently reversed himself and led a tireless, and tiresome, campaign against the "monster" Malthus. Godwin also abandoned his original friendliness; his last major work, *Of Population*, was a congeries of misrepresentations and pseudo-data that attacked Malthus from every side.

In the works of these literati, and often in the hostile tradition that partly derived from them, the most elementary facts about Malthus—his name, his date of birth, his profession—were consistently misstated. For example, though Malthus never used "Thomas" and was known to his friends as "Robert," to designate him as "Thomas Malthus" is not formally incorrect, of course; it is no more an error than calling the twenty-eighth president of the United States "Thomas Wilson."

On the memorial tablet that the Royal Economic Society had placed in Bath Abbey, Malthus's date of birth is given as February 14, 1766; and of the others who cited that day, few could resist adding a witticism about St. Valentine's Day. Leslie Stephen's article in the *Dictionary of National Biography* gives the date as February 17, another bad guess. From the still-extant registry at Wooton, Surrey, it is clear that Malthus was born on February 13.

There is a privately printed little work, *Collections for a History of the Family of Malthus* by one John Orlebar Payne, and even this narrowly focused monograph mentions Robert's older brother but only one of his five sisters. According to Marx, in contrast to other Protestant clergymen who "contributed to the increase of population to a really unbecoming extent," Malthus had taken "the monastic vow of celibacy." Another myth, that he was the father of eleven girls, was repeated from one source to the next, finally showing up in 1958 in the introduction to a standard edition of the *Essay*. In fact, Malthus was married and the father of three children, Henry, Emily, and Lucy.

Like most English scholars of his time, Malthus, a believing Anglican, had a "living" as a curate. None of those who made a point of designating him as "Rev." T. R. Malthus even attempted to show that Professor Malthus's incidental ecclesiastical tie biased his writings on social themes; on the contrary, some critics denounced him as an atheist because, in their view, his principle of population, which brought man fully into nature as one species among others, was thereby sacrilegious.

II

In more substantive terms, Malthus's theories have suffered from their association with the birth-control movement, Social Darwinism, and Marxism.

The first important figure to amend Malthus's population doctrine by advocating contraception was Francis Place, a well-to-do London tailor. With a number of like-minded men who met regularly in his library, Place was active in the effort to repeal laws prohibiting trade unions, the campaign to establish London University, the reform bill to extend suffrage, the Anti-Corn League, and the Chartists. He also undertook to defend Malthus against Godwin's criticisms, and recommended "such precautionary means as would, without being injurious to health or destructive of female delicacy, prevent conception." Malthus never responded to this gesture, and he had altogether very little to say about the movement that was getting under way in the first decades of the last century. As he stated in an appendix to the 1817 edition of the *Essay*, his objection to contraception was based only incidentally on religious grounds. More fundamentally, he held that the sexual drive of a man who waited chastely until he could support a wife and children would induce him to greater industry. But "if it were possible for each married couple to limit by a wish the number of their children, there is certainly reason to fear that the indolence of the human race would be greatly increased." It is a debatable argument, but not inherently absurd.

Yet the birth-control movements formally established in various countries were typically called "Malthusian" or "Neo-Malthusian." Virtually all the leaders of England's

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Malthusian League, founded in 1877, were freethinkers; and by such statements as that "the Bible blasphemes humanity," one of them, Charles Bradlaugh, affronted every Christian and Jew. George Drysdale's *Elements of Social Science*, a book of some six hundred finely printed pages and the movement's most important statement, bound the advocacy of contraception to a kind of simplified Ricardianism (thus, *not* to Malthus's economic theory), as well as to free love. More generally, proponents of birth control also supported such other sectarian views as pacifism, temperance, vegetarianism, and sometimes—though not necessarily—feminism. Annie Besant, the most famous of the early birth controllers, opened her autobiography with her horoscope, for "that there is a real science of astrology I have no doubt." Eventually she joined the Theosophical Society; "I heard a Voice that was later to become to me the holiest sound on earth," she wrote.

In a recent book by the English demographer J. A. Banks, *Victorian Values: Secularism and the Size of Families*, he showed that there was virtually no overlap between the usually honored pioneers of birth control and what he termed the "pioneers of the smaller family." "Very few indeed of those people who were actually practicing family limitation consistently and successfully during this period were supporters of the secularist movement." He might have gone further and argued that among the general run of English parents the neo-Malthusian movement became a considerable impediment to planned parenthood. The advent of contraception as a legal and familial norm was probably delayed for a generation or more by the persistent link to marginal or crackpot theses. And that poor Malthus ended up as the centerpiece of this mishmash he would have found at the very least puzzling—and distressing.

It is well known that Charles Darwin and Alfred Russel Wallace both hit upon the theory of evolution independently and, in a rare spirit of scientific cooperation, agreed to share the honor due both of them. Fewer persons, probably, are aware that for both biologists Malthus's principle of population was the crucial catalyst that brought their vast data into significant order. As Darwin wrote in his *Autobiography* (there is a similar passage in Wallace's *My Life*), when he happened to read Malthus "for amusement," there he found "at last a theory by which to work." As Wallace later summed up how the *Essay* inspired his theorizing, from the geometrical progression of procreation and the limit to sustenance, one deduces a struggle for existence; from the struggle for existence and variation in offspring, one deduces a survival of the fittest; and from the survival of the fittest and the constant change in the environment, one concludes how new species come into being.

In the introductory paragraphs of the *Essay*, Malthus had noted that the principle of population governs not merely human beings but all of nature; and after much hesitation, Darwin wrote *The Descent of Man*, extending his argumentation concerning plants and other animals. Both Darwin and Malthus saw humans as one species among others, and the controversy about evolution was often sharper in that more personal context. Herbert Spencer became the principal theorist of "Social Darwinism," a version of laissez-faire embedded in a philosophical anarchism derived partly from Godwin. Not only did Spencer coin the phrase "survival of the fittest," but it was he more than Darwin who popularized the term "evolution," which was used rather sparingly in the first editions of *On the Origin of Species*. It would be almost more appropriate to dub Darwin a "biological Spencerian" rather than repeat the typical reverse ascription.

Even less can one justly hold that Spencer, that prophet of inescapable progress, derived his optimism from the cautiously hopeful Malthus. The clearest contrast between the two is a paper in which Spencer enunciated "a theory of population." The "general law of adaptation" to straitened circumstances, he wrote, would result in a wider distribution of the human attributes most needed—not strength or agility, for instance, but intelligence and self-control. These characteristics, continually reinforced by population pressure, would lead to an ever more effective control of the environment. It is a delightful paradox that the very mechanism that Malthus had used to refute Godwin's utopianism was turned on him to prove the inevitability of indefinite progress.

Those who denigrate Social Darwinism as an attack on the welfare state have not usually applied their strictures to Darwin. Though the link from Malthus is much more tenuous, it

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became almost routine for critics to denounce the author of the *Essay* for all the real or alleged sins of Herbert Spencer.

A prime instance was Marx's denunciation of Malthus, which was exceptionally vituperative even by the permissive standards of socialist polemics. What motivated the repeated assault on "the contemptible Malthus" as "a shameless sycophant of the ruling classes" who perpetrated "a sin against science"? Marx, like Malthus, denounced such men as Godwin and Condorcet, whom Engels dubbed "utopians." And Marx treated Ricardo, another "bourgeois" economist, with respect, even though in some aspects Malthus's economic theories were closer to the Marxist model. The reason for Marx's hostility was that the principle of population transgressed all forms of social organization and thus set limits to human betterment also under socialism. "Malthus's theory of population," Marx wrote, "is not only paramount over the system of wage labor but also over *every* social system." If Malthus's theory is correct, then "socialism cannot abolish poverty, which is based on nature, but only *communalize* it, distributing it equally over the whole surface of society." However little he liked the appellation, Marx was also a utopian, indeed more of a visionary than the predecessors that he and Engels had sought to displace by labeling themselves as "scientific" socialists. St. Simon, Proudhon, and the others had called on all men of goodwill to work for the establishment of a perfect society. For this summons Marx and Engels substituted the dogma that the second coming is inevitable, but this hardly made them less perfectibilist.

How persistent the utopian vision has remained among Marxists can be exemplified by one anecdote. In 1947, at the first meeting of the newly established United Nations Population Commission, the Ukrainian delegate, supported by the other Soviet delegate, recited the canon as a universal maxim: "I would consider it barbaric for the Commission to contemplate a limitation of marriages or of legitimate births, and this for any country whatsoever, at any period whatsoever. With an adequate social organization it is possible to face any increase in population." And the Yugoslav delegate added, "Cruelly, you [Western demographers] intend to adjust the population to the economy, while we Communists want to adjust the economy to the population."

III

The breakthrough to a new estimation of Malthus started in 1966 with the publication of Malthus's travel diaries, which give a very attractive view of an eager young scholar, hungry for fresh experiences and new knowledge. The manuscript begins with a list of topics headed "Sm's Qns" (for "Smith's Questions"), the queries that a reader of *The Wealth of Nations* would pose in order to understand any society. Interspersed with hackneyed notes on scenery or the weather we find an account of Norway's geological formations, the output of mines that Malthus visited, a description of the primitive plows used in Norwegian fields, lists of the foods that his hosts served and ate themselves—oaten cakes, for instance, that "seemed to consist more of chaff than of oatmeal; I brought a bit away for a specimen."

Moreover, the 1799 trip to Norway, one year after the first edition of the *Essay*, was a principal stimulus to its fundamental emendation. In Norway, Malthus found an important clue to what he subsequently termed "preventive checks," which in his schema supplemented the "positive checks" of vice and misery. Every male was required to serve in that country's armed forces, and once drafted, "the man could not marry without producing a certificate signed by the minister of the parish that he had substance enough to support a wife and family, and even then it was at the will of the officer to let him marry or not." Because of such institutionalized restrictions on possibly improvident marriages, Norwegians formed their families at a relatively late age; and, in spite of the low mortality, the population grew very slowly.

Malthus's travel diaries were edited by the late Patricia James. She had introduced them with a biographical sketch, and over the next several years she assiduously collected extant bits and pieces about Malthus's life. There were no direct descendants, and collateral relatives consisted largely of maiden ladies, each of whom Mrs. James dutifully interviewed. She had never in her life, she told me, drunk so many cups of tea. During the same years, I was following a parallel path of research, with sometimes the same kinds of blind alleys. When I heard, for instance, that Malthus's library had been donated to Jesus

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College, Cambridge, I set aside a few days for what I anticipated would afford me a notable glimpse into Malthus's mind. By appointment, I met one of the librarians, who took me through several locked doors along a corridor to the end of one building's wing, where in a cold and gloomy room there were stored, uncatalogued, the literary remains of one of the college's most famous graduates. A few small bulbs hung from the ceiling, and to read the title of a book taken at random from the shelves, I had to carry it over to one of these skimpy lights. It was impossible to reach the top shelves, for no stools or ladders were available. Bundled up in my overcoat, I asked the librarian how one could work under such conditions, and she suggested that I might return on a pleasant summer day. It is another indication of the change in Malthus's status that eventually someone else (who possibly avoided the rigors of Britain's winter and worked on pleasant summer days) has catalogued the library and published the results in an interesting little booklet.

In 1979 Mrs. James's splendid biography of Malthus was published and also my complementary book, which concentrated on his writings and what critics and others had made of them. A year later the Société de Démographie Historique sponsored a conference in Paris at which more than five hundred participants from sixty-one countries listened to and discussed 164 contributions. Two selections of these papers were published, *Malthus Past and Present* in English and *Malthus hier et aujourd'hui* in French. Four years later the British Society for Population Studies sponsored another conference where the focus was shifted from the past to the future. A selection of the papers, which appeared under the title *The State of Population Theory: Forward from Malthus*, had as their common theme the many ways in which present-day demographers are indebted, sometimes without knowing it, to the founder of their discipline.

By this time it had become ludicrous that some of Malthus's minor works were difficult to locate, that some of even his major works were ineptly edited. The day was ripe for the appearance of *The Works of Thomas Robert Malthus*, which the London firm of William Pickering has published in eight elegant volumes with E. A. Wrigley, a fine historical demographer, as senior editor. Apart from its many attractive features, the most striking fact about the set is its date—1986. Of a man whose name has entered every European language, whose theories are cited (usually incorrectly) by every journalist, it took just over a century and a half from the year he died to assemble a compendium of his writings.

IV

Why is it that the well-to-do, who materially are able to provide for the largest families, typically have had fewer children than the poor? The best response, probably, is known among demographers as "social capillarity," a phrase coined by the French analyst Arsène Dumont in his 1890 book, *Dépopulation et civilisation*: men advance as oil rises in a lamp wick, and if those at the bottom want to reach the top, they must not encumber themselves with excessive family responsibilities. In fact, the theory originated with Malthus, whose elaboration of it had one important difference. For Dumont, a zealous nationalist, men who chose to advance themselves rather than producing more Frenchmen were virtually treasonable. For Malthus, on the contrary, the smaller families of the upwardly mobile constituted a marvelous escape from the trap of positive checks; the solution to population pressure was embourgeoisement.

Malthus certainly believed firmly that each person is responsible for his own fate, and he continually exhorted everyone to follow his injunctions to practice moral restraint. "The happiness of the whole is to be the result of the happiness of individuals, and to begin with the first of them. . . . He who performs his duty faithfully will reap the full fruits of it, whatever may be the number of others who fail." However, this perfect expression of the classical liberal model applied to the problem of fertility hardly represented the whole of Malthus's thought on the subject. He did not believe that those who procreated too abundantly should be merely exhorted to desist. The decisions of potential parents about whether to have a (or another) child are typically based, Malthus held, on their circumstances, which differ systematically between the social class with generally small families and that with too high a fertility for the good of the parents, the children, or society. Good social policy, then, begins by reducing this gap, bringing closer together the social condi-

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tions of those that reproduce to excess and those that do not.

> Of all the causes which tend to generate prudential habits among the lower classes of society, the most essential is unquestionably civil liberty. No people can be much accustomed to form plans for the future who do not feel assured that their industrious exertions . . . will be allowed free scope. . . . [Moreover,] civil liberty cannot be permanently secured without political liberty, . . . [which] teach[es] the lower classes of society to respect themselves by obliging the higher classes to respect them.

In line with these ideas, Malthus advocated a system of universal free education.

> In most countries, among the lower classes of people, there appears to be something like a standard of wretchedness, a point below which they will not continue to marry and propagate their species. . . . The principal circumstances which contribute to raise [this standard] are liberty, security of property, the diffusion of knowledge, and a taste for the comforts of life. Those which contribute principally to lower it are despotism and ignorance.

That Malthus was a compassionate philosopher—a "caring" person, in today's cant—can be shown not only from the policy conclusions spelled out in his main works but also from his occasional writing. He reviewed two books by Thomas Newenham on Ireland, using the occasion to comment on Britain's policy toward that unhappy land. It was in England's interest to foster a friendly population, Malthus wrote, instead of a hostile mass of destitution. "By every principle of justice and policy," Parliament should shift the burdens of taxes and tithes "from the poor tenantry to the rich landlords." More generally, "let the Irish Catholics have all they have demanded; for they have asked nothing but what strict justice and good policy should concede to them." Perhaps nothing one could cite from Malthus's corpus contradicts more forcefully the prevalent view of his theory. Even in the case of Ireland, where indeed the rapid growth of available subsistence had been followed by a still more rapid increase of population, Malthus did not view this succession as simple cause and effect. The underlying reason was the degradation of the Irish Catholic, who, seeing no escape from his lowly condition, spent his life proliferating. Even today, the emotional effect of Malthus's language is hardly to be found outside the writings of Irish nationalists. At that time, with Anglicans, Presbyterians, Methodists, and Radicals more or less united in their anti-Catholic stance, and with English Catholics somewhat embarrassed by their animalic co-religionists, Malthus's demand for responsible government, free trade, and elementary justice was more exceptional still.

In several respects Malthus's observations on the American colonies are especially interesting. The colonies' population had doubled or more than doubled every twenty-five years, and Malthus took these figures as the highest rate of human reproduction under the most favorable circumstances. The large expanse of almost uninhabited land was one factor, but as Malthus indicated by a contrast with Spanish and Portuguese colonies, the decisive factor was liberty, both economic and political. The potential prosperity implicit in the rich resources could be realized only through a social system that encouraged each producer to work hard by permitting him to retain almost all of what he produced rather than paying it out to church or state.

The usual implication in Malthus's discussions of European populations is that their "tendency" was to grow too rapidly relative to available resources. Good policy, therefore, consisted in institutional checks to early and improvident marriages, as well as reforms that would provide everyone with the means and the will to imitate the small-family norm starting to spread among the middle class. But the extraordinarily rapid growth of the population in the American colonies (and subsequently the United States formed out of them) was, in Malthus's view, of great benefit to the people involved. In other words, an optimum size and rate of growth exist, depending on the social and economic conditions. Malthus neither used the term *optimum* nor developed the idea very far beyond a bare outline; but then no one since then has gone much further in specifying what the "best" number of people is for any country.

It is almost required of any commentary on Malthus to remark that his principle of population, however relevant it may have been when he wrote, became obsolete by the end of the nineteenth century. Vast improvements in the production, storage, and transportation of food, unforeseen by Malthus (as well as everyone else), made possible a simultaneous

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increase in population and rise in prosperity. But such an outcome does not contradict the mature Malthus, who foresaw no disaster from growing numbers but suggested rather that the necessary balance between people and food would be achieved through a decline in fertility rather than by a rise in mortality. Unlike those who write about "Malthusian" checks (meaning only what he called the positive checks), Malthus was concerned about more than technology; that many people today are hungry in spite of the full availability of an agronomy to feed them he would have ascribed to the frequent lack of civil and political liberties. In short, those who find Malthus a faulty prophet often do so by misrepresenting what in fact he prophesied.

To appraise the frequent judgment of Malthus as a political reactionary, one must first of all consider the criteria that are being applied. Malthus was an active member of the Whig party, and the social reforms he advocated—in addition to the crucial one of universal schooling—included an extension of suffrage, free medical care for the poor, state assistance to emigrants, and even direct relief to casual laborers or to families with more than six children; similarly, he opposed child labor in factories and free trade when it benefited the traders but not the public. Apart from such details, he was an honest and benevolent reformer, committed throughout his life to the betterment of society and all the people in it.

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CONTROVERSY

The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers An Exchange

PAUL KENNEDY

It is always interesting but not necessarily comfortable to be engaged in a debate with Edward Luttwak. After his recent assault in these pages ("Paul Kennedy's Rise and Fall," THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, Spring 1989), I was reminded of Trevor-Roper's rueful review many years ago of one of Geoffrey Elton's works:

> Mr. G. R. Elton is a Cambridge historian of formidable erudition and emphatic views. His work . . . has upset old orthodoxies and generated active controversies from which his challengers seldom emerge ungored. So rigorously does he charge that even an innocent bystander may be nicked by the flashing horn. This new book adds appreciably to the list of victims. . . . I feel lucky to have escaped myself with only a slight, glancing blow.*

The difference in Trevor-Roper's review of Elton and Mr. Luttwak's review of my book being, I suppose, that Mr. Luttwak's direct charge was intended to toss this writer out of the academic bullring altogether. At the very least, this sort of writing offers a healthy contrast to the bland, noncommittal tone of so many other reviewers. Nonetheless, it remains important that the bull—or the overemphatic reviewer—is charging in the right direction. Huffing and puffing for its own sake has little practicality in a bullring, and still less in a journal like THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR.

So far as I understand it, Luttwak's review consists of three separate aspects: a commentary about factual evidence, a disquisition concerning the impact (or alleged impact) of defense spending upon the American economy, and observations about the decay of standards in the nation's schools, the inefficiency of the "service industries," and the popular preference to put consumption before savings. In all three areas, I am supposed either to have offered "ill-founded assertions," or to have produced erroneous arguments, or to have missed what is really wrong in today's American society—which faults, he feels, contrast sharply with the quality of earlier books of mine upon which great praise is lavished. On all three counts, it is worth climbing back into the bullring to renew the issue.

Mr. Luttwak recalls that he first took aim at *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* in a book review published in the *Washington Post* in late December 1987. A considerable section of it was devoted to what he felt was my technical blunder in describing the French SOMUA S-35 tank of 1940 as being "of very good quality." That was a totally wrong judgment, Luttwak asserts, and (I quote his review) "Kennedy no doubt came across a mention of the S-35 in one of the texts he cites, written by one obviously innocent of any knowledge of tanks." In actual fact—and I would readily concede that I myself am *not* an armored-warfare expert—my most important source was Robert A. Doughty's prizewinning study *The Seeds of Disaster: The Development of French Army Doctrine, 1919–1939*

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* The review was of Elton's *The Practice of History* and appeared in the *Sunday Times* in 1967, the year of the book's publication. The Fontana paperback edition (London, 1969) proudly reproduces Trevor-Roper's remarks on the back cover, no doubt feeling that it would boost sales—or at least pique interest.

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(1985); both there and elsewhere, Doughty repeatedly observes that "the French SOMUA-35 tank was the best tank on the battlefield." While other authors have also praised the quality of some of the French armor in 1940, it is worth noting that Colonel Doughty has not only extensively researched in the French military archives, but is a regular U.S. Army officer and currently head of the history department at West Point—and someone hardly "innocent of any knowledge of tanks."

Perhaps, then, it ought not to have been too surprising to see that Luttwak's fresh "charge," in THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, begins with criticisms of some remarks I made upon the NATO-Warsaw Pact military balance in armored forces (tanks again!). I shall save readers of this journal detailed references to Soviet tank types from, for instance, *The Military Balance*—even Luttwak concedes that "the subject is tiresome in its technicalities." But I ought to record that the observation in my book to which he takes such exception, namely, that the masses of older Russian armor are quite likely to "clog up the roads" if they were all unleashed against the West, is based upon opinions offered by Professor John Erickson, perhaps *the* greatest authority upon the Red Army.

There is no reason why Luttwak should not have his own opinions about French armor in 1940, or Soviet armor today, so long as it is understood that they are *opinions* and not necessarily shared by scholars who have done more detailed analysis of those subjects than he has. Any writer who is attempting a general historical synthesis—as *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* clearly is—cannot escape a large degree of reliance upon secondary authorities, some of whom may disagree with others. At the end of the day, the writer himself has to decide which of those "authorities" he prefers, and give reference (and, where possible, explanation) for his conclusions. This I thought I had done, and it seems to me unnecessary for Luttwak to denounce so vehemently those experts who disagree with, say, his own views on the conventional military balance. I suppose that was why I was reminded of Trevor-Roper's remark about charging bulls.

What is equally curious is Luttwak's exaggerated distinction between Kennedy I (the author of "important scholarly works") and Kennedy II (the author of the "simplistic and misleading" *Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*). In both cases, I have to confess, I needed to employ the art of synthesis, to rely heavily upon secondary works and, when the various authorities were in dispute upon this or that issue, to decide which viewpoint I preferred. My argument about Britain's "continental" *versus* "maritime" strategy in *The Rise and Fall of British Naval Mastery* (1976) threw itself in favor of one of the rivaling schools of thought, and was predictably criticized by members of the other camp. In much the same way, my conclusions about responsibility for *The Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism* (1980) were very much influenced by the works of Fritz Fischer and his pupils—writings acutely disliked by other German historians. In both earlier examples, Luttwak may feel (as I did) that the evidence supports one side and not the other; but why he is so annoyed that I follow the same technique in my latest book, and why I am denounced for "defecting" from my old, historical scholarship—rather harsh, even in an academic bullring—is beyond me.

The second feature of Luttwak's review is altogether more interesting and (I think) important, because it deals with the hotly disputed issue of whether the high American post–1945 defense spending is responsible for the country's relative economic decline. Given the very sharp increases in defense expenditures under the Reagan administration, and the current anxieties about the Federal deficit and the state of the U.S. economy, this argument has obvious political relevance: if it could be proven that defense spending has a detrimental impact, then it is likely to be slashed—which is, of course, why left-of-center figures strive to "prove" the contention whilst conservatives strongly deny it. Among the arguments deployed by the latter are some advanced here by Mr. Luttwak: that a greater share of GNP was spent upon defense in the period of American ascendancy, that is, under Eisenhower and Kennedy, than under Reagan; that in many of the post–1945 years, including those of the 1980s, the "national defense account" has consumed only about one-fifth of public expenditures; in other words, that the critics of military spending are

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going after the wrong target in linking it to national decline (always assuming that the very idea of "decline" is admitted by conservatives, as it clearly is, in his usual emphatic manner, by Luttwak himself).

But whatever position one adopts on this complicated issue of defense spending and economic performance (and I recommend here the recent thoughtful piece by Aaron Friedberg, "The Political Economy of American Strategy," *World Politics*, April 1989), the fact remains that Luttwak misunderstands the order of causality that I advanced in *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*. In his simplistic rendition, the book is supposed to argue that "foreign ambitions led to excess military expenditure which led to economic decline and to an eventual decline in power." Thus, "imperial overstretch"—the now hotly debated key term in this argument about great-power rise and fall—is portrayed as being the *result* of excessive military endeavors; and since U.S. defense spending under Reagan was in Luttwak's view not excessive, it cannot be held responsible for decline.

Now it is true that *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* points repeatedly to the fate of those nations and empires—Spain under Philip IV, Sweden under Charles XII, Germany and Japan in the Second World War—which strategically overextended themselves and were exhausted, and eventually defeated, in the process. But that itself is an *accompanying* cause, not the central factor, in the tale of why states have enjoyed a greater or lesser position in the modern world-system. The greatest reason for the shifting *relative* strengths of the Powers, as I pointed out on the first page of my Introduction (p. xv) has been "the uneven rate of growth among different societies and . . . the technological and organizational breakthroughs which bring a greater advantage to one society than another." States with rising economies tend to enjoy rising power and influence; states with slower-growing or stagnant economies tend to lose some of their earlier-achieved power and influence. In sum, "the history of the rise and later fall of the leading countries in the Great Power system since the advance of Western Europe in the sixteenth century—that is, of nations such as Spain, the Netherlands, France, the British Empire, and currently the United States—shows a very significant correlation *over the longer term* between productive and revenue-raising capacities on the one hand and military strength on the other" (p. xvi). Nothing I have read in the past two years of debate causes me to modify that proposal, which is, in fact, close to being a platitude.

The second major point I advanced in *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* was that a nation's economic and military growth and decline rarely seem to have taken place in *parallel*. On the contrary, there appears to be

> a noticeable "lag time" between the trajectory of a state's relative economic strength and the trajectory of its military/territorial influence. Once again, the reason for this is not difficult to grasp. An economically expanding Power—Britain in the 1860s, the United States in the 1890s, Japan today—may well prefer to become rich rather than to spend heavily on armaments. A half-century later, priorities may well have altered. The earlier economic expansion has brought with it overseas obligations (dependence upon foreign markets and raw materials, military alliances, perhaps bases and colonies). Other, rival Powers are now economically expanding at a faster rate, and wish in their turn to extend their influence abroad. The world has become a more competitive place, and market shares are being eroded. Pessimistic observers talk of decline; patriotic statesmen call for "renewal" (p. xxiii).

But if one accepts this rough-and-ready formula about chronology—that is, that "economic growth precedes Great-Power enhancement, and relative economic slowdown precedes Great-Power erosion"—then it should be clear why Luttwak is charging at the wrong target. The argument is not that high military spending *caused* the relative economic decline of the United States, but rather that the relative slowdown in American productivity and growth makes it *harder* for the economy to sustain large-scale defense spending. Once again, this seemed to me close to being a platitude. Indeed, as Friedberg puts it, "In the end, Kennedy's reflections on the relationship between defense spending and decline come down to a simple and seemingly incontestable observation: once a leading power has begun to slip economically, *for whatever reason*, it will find it increasingly difficult to sustain large (still less, rising) defense burdens" (Friedberg, op. cit., p. 397).

By extension, therefore, this ought to deal with the commonly used but irrelevant argu-

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ment that spending 6 to 7 percent of GNP upon American defense forces today can't be harmful because around 10 percent was being allocated thirty years ago. Whether or not those earlier defense burdens were easily borne—and Eisenhower's frequent complaints about their effects suggest they were not—the fact is that the United States economy was both differently structured *and* occupied a much more competitive global position then than it does nowadays. A national economy that is well structured and productive—with a flourishing manufacturing base, large monetary reserves, quality products, a well-trained population, an ample supply of engineers and scientists—stands a good chance of sustaining large defense expenditures over time. A national economy that is poorly structured—with a weakened manufacturing base, heavy reliance upon imports, low savings ratio, dependence upon foreign borrowing, unimpressive educational system—may find it difficult to sustain even medium-level defense spending. A country full of lawyers, realtors, and health-care specialists may produce the same Gross National Product each year as one of scientists, engineers, and skilled craftsmen: but the *structure* of the latter's society and economy is much stronger in strategical terms. Historically, when the Dutch economy (in the eighteenth century) and British economy (in the early twentieth century) moved from "manufacturing" to "services," they also found it increasingly difficult to maintain their power position. Should the United States not therefore be concerned at similar trends?

My chief interest in writing *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* was not to "predict" the decline of America, but to explore the interactions between "Economic Change and Military Conflict" (as the subtitle puts it). Although I tried to summarize the secondary literature on the reader's behalf, it was therefore less important to me *why* a nation's economy grew faster than others at a certain period than *what* the power-political consequences were. In the same way, while summarizing the conclusions of economic historians in the field, I felt it was less important to dwell upon the *reasons* for the slowdown of the Dutch economy in the eighteenth century, or the unimpressive pace of British economic growth in the late nineteenth century, than to explore the *impacts* of that relative decline upon their Great Power status. In composing the final and controversial chapter, "Towards the Twenty-First Century," I thought that a similar thought process was in evidence. For this author, explaining the dramatic economic expansion of Japan over the past few decades was less central to the book than reflecting over the possible political consequences of that growth—just as explaining the relative economic decline of the United States and, still more, the Soviet Union since the 1950s was less central than asking what might be the strategical implications for both Superpowers of such ominous trends.

But if one *did* focus upon the reasons for relative economic decline—whether it be in Spain's case, or Britain's, or that of the United States today—it is likely that attention would be drawn to many of the features that Luttwak bemoans: low savings ratios, excessive consumer spending, a skewed taxation system, inadequate technical education, and so on. My own feeling is that, if anything, one would need to *add* to that list, including (for example) low rates of *non-military* R & D investment, poor infrastructure, insufficient numbers of engineers, neglect of product design, "short-horizon" finance, ignorance of the preferences of foreign consumers, and so on—a catalogue worryingly close to the list of factors by which economic historians explain Britain's own relative decline. But that focus upon *explaining* decline—which Luttwak thinks I have been doing, or perhaps ought to have been doing—is quite different from my investigation of the strategical consequences of decline, *once the latter has occurred.*

Finally, if a scholar as able and intelligent as Luttwak can misread, and mis-describe, the arguments in *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers,* it may be useful to offer two further remarks, chiefly for the benefit of those who (with or without reading the book) believe it is about the *immediate* and *inevitable* decline of the United States. The first is that the controversial chapter 8 was not about this country in 1988 or 1989—and certainly not about election-year politics! It is about the year 2000 or 2010, and the American position in the world *if* certain of these more worrying trends continue. The language chosen was conditional and about the longer term, as in

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(to use the most misquoted phrase of all) my suggestion that the United States "runs the risk . . . of what might roughly be termed 'imperial overstretch' " (p. 515, *Rise and Fall*).

But the very conditional nature of the phraseology—not to mention the disclaimers in the opening paragraphs of chapter 8—ought to suggest that it is wrong to call such writings "deterministic." That there are deleterious trends under way that have weakened the economic foundations of American strategy since Eisenhower's time, and that certain of those trends (educational standards, share of high-tech manufacturing, international debt) seem if anything to be worsening, is of great concern. But there is no built-in force that determines that the trends cannot be corrected. As many reform groups have pointed out, these weaknesses could be dealt with *if* there was the public and political will to accept change—higher taxes, lower consumption, stiffer educational standards, altered career preferences, and so on. But where at the moment is the evidence that that will exists? Mr. Luttwak calls anxiously for "painful fiscal and educational cures," but few in the Executive or Congress or business or the public at large seem eager to pay the price of that "pain." Until they are, it seems not unreasonable to conclude that the problems of relative decline will remain to burden the generations that follow.

EDWARD N. LUTTWAK

Paul Kennedy's tauromachic opening is good clean fun, and I will certainly not protest the flattering evocation of G. R. Elton, but surely the only intent imputable to my review is that I was hoping to "toss" Kennedy back into the academic bullring, and not out of it—with *academic* denoting the scholarly, as per Kennedy I, as opposed to the publicistic, as per Kennedy II, he of *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* (*RFGP* in what follows).

I gladly accept Kennedy's invitation to concentrate on the central issue of the relative economic decline of the United States, but first I must comment on the question of tanks, "authorities," and influences.

Kennedy claims that there is no difference between K-I and K-II because both necessarily relied on secondary sources; he then proceeds to equate the influence of the Fritz Fischer interpretation of German history on K-I's *The Rise of the Anglo-German Antagonism* with K-II's reliance on Robert A. Doughty in the matter of 1940 French tanks, and on many other "authorities" for many other, more important, essentially technical propositions in *RFGP*.

It is precisely because I believe that there is a decisive difference between a normal exposure to influences and an inadmissible reliance on authorities that I raised the whole tank business to begin with—choosing tanks rather than some other subject because it so happens that for many years I made my living as a professional consultant on armored warfare and armored-vehicle configurations.

As a historian, Kennedy can legitimately choose to follow Fischer because he need not blindly depend on Fischer's views: he can reexamine Fischer's sources, he can test the logic of Fischer's arguments, and he can judge the plausibility of Fischer's depiction of Wilhelmine times and mentalities with the aid of all other depictions of those times and mentalities that he has already studied over the years or may choose to consult afresh.

Matters are quite otherwise in *RFGP*: because he ventures so far afield from the territory of his own expertise, K-II is constantly forced to rely on sources he cannot himself usefully scrutinize, technical propositions he cannot test on his own, and contextual judgments he cannot reexamine independently. Thus when it comes to Doughty and the SOMUA tank (not SOMUA-35; the designation was *Char* S-35), in comparison with the German tanks of the time, Kennedy cannot examine the source (the tank itself, or technical descriptions thereof) as readily as he can look up any source that Fischer cites; for all I know, he may not even have seen a diagram of the beast. If he had, he would no doubt have immediately understood my objection to Doughty's verdict, for one need not be an

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expert on armored warfare to realize that all the theoretical virtues of the S-35 were nullified by its one-man turret, which forced the commander to act as the gunner as well, precluding the fast-paced fire and movement that was, and is, the essential attribute of tanks.

Equally, K-II cannot question the technical judgment of his "authorities" in many other matters far more consequential for his entire argument than the merits of the S-35. And it simply will not do to cite John Erickson's name in lieu of a very persuasive new explanation when it comes to the central question of the military value of Soviet armor.

For if it were indeed true that the masses of older Soviet tanks could only "clog up the roads," it would follow that the entire strategy of the North Atlantic Alliance over the decades of the Cold War was a hideously costly mistake. The central purpose of that strategy was precisely to dissuade a Soviet offensive into Western Europe, an offensive itself only deemed a dangerous threat because of the armored strength of the Soviet army, of necessity consisting not only of the very latest tanks of the first-echelon divisions but also—and indeed more importantly—of the "older" Soviet tanks of the subsequent echelons of an offensive. As a matter of fact, NATO assessments long presumed that the first-echelon Soviet forces could be stopped by non-nuclear combat at the front, and it was precisely because of the anticipated inability of the exhausted defenders to resist the "masses of older Russian [*sic*] armor" of the subsequent waves of an offensive that NATO deemed it necessary to rely on the "first use" of nuclear weapons, a requirement which in turn shaped U.S. strategic-nuclear policy.

Similarly, the entire structure of Soviet military power was focused on those same "older" Soviet tanks: the salient purpose of Soviet nuclear forces was to deter NATO "first use" against the follow-up echelons equipped with them; the salient purpose of the Soviet navy was to impede the reinforcement of NATO across the Atlantic, itself meant to cope with those same echelons; the salient purpose of the vast Soviet investment in theater air defenses was to shield the armored advance as a whole from NATO air attack; the role of Soviet airborne/air assault forces was to open the way for it; and the role of the entire panoply of Soviet mechanized infantry, artillery, combat engineers, and varied service forces was to support the advance of tank units—predominantly equipped with older tanks, of course.

Kennedy is perfectly entitled to argue that both the successive leaders and planners of NATO, and before them, the successive leaders of the Soviet Union and of its armed forces were simply wrong during the span of several decades. But he cannot contend with such a huge issue by casually claiming that the base of the inverted pyramid of reciprocal military preparations was chimerical, because those tanks would merely "clog up the roads," then citing a name however eminent in lieu of presenting a suitably complete argument. John Erickson, by the way, is indeed generally considered to be the greatest English-language authority on the history of the Red Army; he claims no such eminence as an analyst of contemporary military matters.

K-II the publicist is thus readily separable from K-I the historian, for only the former made himself captive to authorities because of "historiographical overstretch." Had K-I been confronted by a source that claimed that battleships could only clog up harbors, so that the entire British response to pre–1914 German navalism was mere hysteria, he would have known what to do with it—because the careful historian who remains within the realm of his expertise can also absorb such technical matters as fall within its scope.

On the central issue of relative economic decline, we are faced with Kennedy's defense in what amounts to an authorial paternity suit: Kennedy simply disclaims the thesis that made him famous, that is, the sequence *foreign ambitions > excessive military expenditure > economic decline > power decline* which I, and the world, ascribed to him. One may detect the unease of his denial ("Now it is true that *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers* points repeatedly to the fate of those nations . . . "), but Kennedy insists that the suggestive examples that account for hundreds of his pages (imperial Spain, bellicose Sweden, etc.) should be disregarded, and that we should remain content with the tautological proposition that different societies have "uneven rates of growth" because . . . their rates of growth are uneven. It is either that or the "overstretch" sequence, for Kennedy offers no other theory to explain why different

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societies have different rates of growth; he does not, for example, argue that comparable societies have different rates of growth because their societal priorities are different (my thesis, incidentally).

Kennedy now writes that the message of *RFGP* was that there is a long-term correlation between productive and revenue-raising capacities on the one hand and military strength on the other. That much even the most birdbrained of hussars could not avoid recognizing by 1915 or so, seeing the products of rival munitions industries flying overhead, and surely *RFGP* would not have attracted as much attention as it did because of so feeble a platitude. The same is true for Kennedy's second "major point," i.e., that economic-military growth and decline are sequential rather than parallel processes. Quite. But who could possibly doubt that second platitude? Perhaps we have all misread *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, but such an extreme case of collective hallucination is surely less plausible than my own attribution of paternity.

Finally, I am glad that Kennedy now emphatically agrees that apart from base-data distortions (in 1950 the U.S. accounted for 50 percent of the global GNP only because 1950 = 1945 + 5, and Europeans and Japanese were still reconstructing), the causes of our relative economic decline are internal distortions rather than external ambitions, the result of "societal overstretch" as well as all the other factors that he lists. "Imperial overstretch" is thus reduced to one more excuse for the political failure to accept and apportion the painful remedies that we both consider necessary—an excuse itself dissolving now that the defense share of the GNP is in rapid decline. K-II is dead; may K-I prosper anew.

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Poems

DAVID GRAHAM

Self-Portrait with Wisecracks

I have no previous address.
I don't see well at night—once I drove into
a pond, thinking it a wet parking lot.
Next day I did it again, for in the light
I don't think too well. The park where I played
as a child is now a waste-treatment plant.
Too bad it was one back then, too. I have
no idea why my address book is
full of names bloated beyond recognition,
including old landlords, insurance clerks,
including in-laws, including you.

Whenever I move I switch parties:
these days I'm a Democrat with serious
doubts about democracy. Gentle to
dogs, I avoid cats, for they squint, as I do,
for they are nocturnal, as I am,
for they can creep, and we do. When it rains
I sob a little, not much—I try not
to overdo it. But I have a pain,
right here in my wallet, right here
in my *curriculum vitae*. If I could sing I'd sing
more slowly now in my fourth slow decade.

I know to the second what time it's not,
I'll strike when ready and not before,
how strong I become without knowing!
In America, as Americans
love to say, mirrors are larger, deeper
than lakes. I go for swims in my birthday shame.
I know Daniel Boone's a good union man
doing piecework for fantastic wages,
and Johnny Appleseed's the owner
of coast-to-coast nursery franchises.

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But at charade time I'm in the bathroom
with mystery my wonders to perform.
Parties wither away like summer grass,
and I approve. A dog messily wrecks
a squirrel, and I am obscurely pleased.
If you want me, look under "mixed feelings,"
where I sing like dusk, like water vapor,
like the million pseudonyms of one mind.

Nothing

So I was afraid to speak up, speak well,
afraid of rank snakeskin, fish scale, mushroom,
and when it rained, afraid of the lightning
no one can see, afraid of tornadoes
slicing across the TV weather map
and the day-after front-page photograph.
When wind slackened I was afraid of flood,
of the dark that passes all understanding.
So I was afraid of the knucklebones
of my sick grandfather, wrapped all day
around his pipe, knocking ashes down: so.
So I feared the rebellion of my cells,
that past my growing years they might not stop,
as shadows on the bedroom wall revealed
my shape-shifting, fear-laden silhouette.
So if I had reasons for my unreason,
when morning came I forgot my fear
as a mother forgets each labor pain.
So I feared the examined life I would lead,
though throughout life I have remained a child,
with brimming fear at every open door,
with fear elastic and often welcome,
with one eye on the ceiling, one on the floor,
for the one will fall, and the one will rise,
and nothing to fear but nothing itself.

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Books

The Great War and Paul Fussell's Memory

DAN PINCK

WARTIME: UNDERSTANDING AND BEHAVIOR IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR. *By Paul Fussell. Oxford University Press. $19.95.*

This time, Paul Fussell sets his literary range finder on the Second World War, and with cynical precision he fires away at the Allied conduct of the war, its leaders, the effects of the war on the military and civilian populations, and the war's influence on literature. Fussell lets his biases hang out with an almost nihilistic abandon. His arsenal of abuse is stocked with sweeping generalizations that he defends with disjointed inferences. (It is proper to admit up front that my own biases about the war are as strong as his; that the depth of my cynicism is every bit as great as Fussell's; and that I make sweeping, careless generalizations, in private conversations, which I seldom bother to defend.) Peripatetic broadsides are aimed at military and political leaders—our leaders, not the enemy's, with insouciant gusto and petit point venom.

Fussell is facile; but he is bright and I like him. As a sardonic connoisseur of the foibles of war he possesses a combat-ready knife, employing both the various slashing operations of the Fairbairn-Sykes or the heavy, broad-bladed, machete-like features of the Smatchet. In literary combat, Fussell is dangerous; he is well armed and camouflaged with disconcerting literary allusions. Never mind that the Second World War was not fought to save abused poets and popular novelists; Fussell invokes their rearguard aid to demolish the best efforts of most of the Allies' leaders who were guilty of just about everything from "stale idiom" to political and military incompetence and perversity. Against Paul Fussell our dead heroes and leaders don't stand a chance.

Fussell writes, "The relative few who actually fought know that the war was not a matter of rational calculation." He quotes Walt Whitman: "The real war will never get in the books." Fussell declares: "Nor will the Second World War, and 'books' includes this one." Maybe not, but with the plethora of books now appearing to coincide with our remembrance of the beginning of the Second World War it seems that the extent and depth of our knowledge provide us with a clarity and insight that delineate many of the irrational calculations that led us to victory and our enemies to defeat. We did win the war, and it was not due to our superior propaganda or political malfeasance.

Fussell did the First World War magnificently in his book *The Great War and Modern Memory*; he illuminated the monstrous slaughter on the battlefield and the outrageous incompetence of military and political leaders with unerring skill and a perfect use of contemporary sources, including poets and writers who fought in the trenches. In its reach and effect, this book was a land mine: the reality of war permeated our consciousness. The real war got into *The Great War*. In Fussell's new book, *Wartime: Understanding and Behavior in the Second World War*, his palette is largely the same but his perspective is distorted to suit his idiosyncratic biases, and his book is less refined because of them. The previous book was an effort to look at the First World War through the words of people who wrote about it, many of whom were

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combatants themselves, and to infer from that study the effect of that experience on the modern mind. And it was a very good job. Fussell's new book is a collection of bits and pieces about the Second World War, some verified, some not verified, and a haphazard collection at that. He looks at the words, including the literature, written about the war. Much of what he quotes wasn't written by combatants; it is used to prove—first, that war is hell (which is not a new insight); second, that war is stupid (also not a new insight); third, that the Second World War was mismanaged, a triumph of dollars and numbers; and fourth, that it served no useful purpose.

The reason this book does not succeed, perhaps, is that, unlike the First World War, in which Fussell did not participate, he was a combat participant in the Second World War at a very nasty level—the infantry—and was deeply affected by it, so much so as to rob the story of its effective literary vision. It's one thing to write about a war you were never in; it's another thing to serve in the frontline infantry. Fussell's distance from the First World War was an important factor in making that book an extraordinarily graceful accomplishment. It may also be *our* distance from it that contributes to our keen appreciation of that book.

The most revealing giveaway of Fussell's attitude about the Second World War, and one that provides a template of unsparing cynicism over his entire book, comes with this volley:

> Now, fifty years later, there has been so much talk about "The Good War," the Justified War, the Necessary War, and the like, that the young and innocent could get the impression that it was really not such a bad thing after all. It's thus necessary to observe that it was a war and nothing else, and thus stupid and sadistic, a war, as Cyril Connolly said, "of which we are all ashamed . . . a war . . . which lowers the standards of thinking and feeling . . . which is as obsolete as drawing and quartering . . . "; further, a war opposed to "every reasonable conception of what life is for, every ambition of the mind or delight of the senses."

Now this is really an outlandish thesis. Fussell's moral, political, and historical judgment is out to lunch. Granted that war is stupid, nevertheless, if any major war was justified, the Second World War was—at least from the Allies' perspective. I know many persons who believe, as I do, that war is stupid but none who believes that we were stupid to fight Germany and Japan.

The Jews, if I read Fussell correctly, had a separate agenda on the war; he claims that Jews had a point of view that was different from other Americans, and he strains my credulity with his opinions about this. "Although the Jews entertained a different view, to most American soldiers and sailors the United States, at least, was pursuing the war solely to defend itself from the monsters who had bombed Pearl Harbor without warning." Fussell carries his argument to the present time: "The feeling today that the war was in aid of the Jewish cause, the current resentment that more was not done to relieve Auschwitz and similar hell-holes, slights the Pacific, anti-Japanese dimension of the war, which was the official—and unofficial—reason America had gone into the war in the first place." Ah, so.

I haven't the foggiest idea on what evidence Fussell bases his pronouncements. At another point, Fussell invokes the support of the late Randall Jarrell who, writing to a friend, says, "99 of 100 people in the army haven't the faintest idea what the war's about." So much for Fussell's research. I must admit that Fussell uses Arthur Miller as a pinch hitter to buttress his argument. Miller, we are advised, worked fourteen hours a day at the Brooklyn Navy Yard and observed that the great majority of his co-workers felt that we fought Germany because she was an ally of Japan.

Let's return to Cyril Connolly and do a close-order drill on his perspective of the war. I must admit that I like Connolly, too; I have a lot of pleasure re-reading my collection of his fine magazine, *Horizon*, though I never pay any attention to his wartime pronouncements. They are silly, to be most charitable, and irrelevant. If the war actually lowered the standard of thinking and feeling, well, that's not so bad considering what else it might have lowered had we not won it. But let's go to the original source and select a few of Connolly's deep thoughts.

In the May 1940 issue of *Horizon*, Connolly wrote, "War is the enemy of creative activity and writers and painters are right and wise to ignore it and to concentrate their talents on other subjects. Since they are politically impotent they can use this time to develop at

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deeper emotional levels, or to improve their weapons by technical experiment." Some, like W. H. Auden and Christopher Isherwood, did just that, hotfooting it to the front lines in the United States; others, like Stephen Spender, stayed home and improved their weapons. From his safe haven in America, Auden contributed poems to *Horizon*; in one, "Spring in Wartime," Auden has the patriotic, brave line, "O not even War can frighten us enough." Spender, staying put, sharpened his creative weapons by asking, "What are we fighting for? Personally, I think we ought to be fighting a kind of defensive rearguard action against the development of absolutely chaotic and brutal conditions." Fussell employs the latter's wartime statement in a section of his book, "The Ideological Vacuum." Well done, poets and fellow troopers. You mounted a distich above and beyond the call of duty.

Fussell's book is a Gatling gun aimed at just about every good feeling and action that produced an Allied victory in the Second World War. It is not dissimilar from a Noam Chomsky attack on the United States, although it is written with more style and its ammunition is generally literary. Eighteen chapters allow Fussell to hit some targets and to miss others. The titles of some of the chapters enlighten his points of departure: "Precision Bombing Will Win the War," "Someone Had Blundered," "Chickenshit, An Anatomy," "Drinking Far Too Much, Copulating Too Little," "The Ideological Vacuum," "Accentuate the Positive," "High-mindedness," "Deprivation," "Reading in Wartime," and "The Real War Will Never Get in the Books." A cursory inspection of the book promises rich reading; debunking and revisionism are in style, and there is a kind of sour-ball pleasure in finding someone who likes to knock prevailing reputations or to impute even more incompetence and vaingloriousness to those who you believe deserve it. Fussell picks many good targets and wastes them. More often than not, though, he shoots with the aplomb of a visitor at an agricultural fair, trying to hit fur ducks with cork bullets—three shots for a buck. General Montgomery and Mark Clark are easy targets. The problem arises when you look upon almost everyone with disdain and suspicion and the ammunition you use to castigate or satirize their activities is poorly suited to the task—or your knowledge and data are so skewered by your biases that you invite skepticism of yourself and not of your targets.

Fussell's main problem—or perhaps it is mine—is that many of his targets are obverted by the weakness, wrongheadedness, and shallowness of his supporting cast of authorities as well as by the misguided inferences he makes. Well-aimed barbs are a pleasure to observe—no doubt of that—but when you're dealing with the viciousness and complexity of warfare, you may not care to have as your authorities and references such students of warfare as Evelyn Waugh, Dylan Thomas, Samuel Beckett, Jean Cocteau, Anthony Powell, Delmore Schwartz, Karl Shapiro, Tokyo Rose, Virginia Woolf, Hesketh Pearson, Martha Gellhorn, Julian Symons, E. M. Forster, T. S. Eliot, Robert Lowell, W. H. Auden, and other such cats. Their art and criticism can be a righteous accompaniment to the painfulness of war, but even a division of poets and writers cannot wholeheartedly deflate the actions of our political and military leaders who, when all is said and done (obviously, it never will be), did lead our side to victory.

Garroting Allied leaders with trivia is Fussell's game. Fussell admits that Churchill's radio speeches were "of undoubted value in sustaining British morale"; but he undercuts this by advising us that Hesketh Pearson, in 1940, thought that Churchill's speeches were "very amateurish," reminding him of "a gangster clergyman who has gone on the stage." Evelyn Waugh is ordered front and center to deliver his opinion: "a Radio Personality who outlived his prime." My eye and Betty Martin. But that's not all. More trivia: "Churchill's well-known V-finger gesture was, in Britain at least, rich with ironic symbolism. He always made the gesture with the front of his hand to the audience, but by turning his hand with its back to the audience, especially with a brisk upward movement, you had the obscene gesture (equivalent to the "finger" in the U.S.A.) known among British schoolboys as "The Fig," betokening "Up yours!" *Sic transit*; so it goes.

Fussell did some of his research at the Imperial War Museum in London, a wondrous depository of records and artifacts of recent wars. In it, you can see a Wellington bomber; a Spad, Montgomery's railway-car headquarters, photographs of winners of the Victoria Cross, Great Britain's highest award for heroism in combat, with descriptions of

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The 1989 Phi Beta Kappa Book Awards

The Phi Beta Kappa Award in Science

THE HOW AND THE WHY: AN ESSAY ON THE ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF PHYSICAL THEORY. *David Park. Princeton University Press. $35.*

Citation: *The How and the Why* is a history of the ways in which people have thought about the physical world and tried to explain it, judged, as the author notes in his preface, "from the words they spoke and the contexts in which they spoke them." Although the book traces the development of physics from the earliest times to the present, it is not simply an account of what happened when. It is an essay in which the very deepest questions relating to physical theory are explored: the relation between the world we perceive and its underlying reality, the nature of explanation in science, the role of mathematics in science, and the relation between magic and science. Mr. Park writes with exceptional grace, erudition, and clarity, yet he is never condescending. After reading this book, the reader will have a coherent picture of the development of our understanding of the physical universe.

The Christian Gauss Award

RUIN THE SACRED TRUTHS: POETRY AND BELIEF FROM THE BIBLE TO THE PRESENT. *Harold Bloom. Harvard University Press. $20.*

Citation: *Ruin the Sacred Truths* brings into conjunction inspired texts from the religious tradition as well as the inspired literature of a secular character, thus opening up the problem posed by the poet Andrew Marvell, who feared that Milton's use of the Bible to write *Paradise Lost* would "ruin (for I saw him strong) / The sacred Truths to Fable and Song." In Bloom's view, the line of separation between sacred and secular writing is blurred by evidences of the sublime in each, so that all "high literature" tends toward the sacred to the degree that it is strikingly original. This book offers incisive critical analysis, starting with the Hebrew Bible and proceeding from Homer to Dante, and from there to Shakespeare, Milton, writers of the Enlightenment and Romanticism, and thence to Freud and beyond. Bloom's gifts as a reader are everywhere in evidence—a huge sensibility as well as intelligence and learning. His writing has all the resolute independence of judgment, the clear style intermixed with passages of almost biblical obscurity, the wide learning and patent love for his subject that we have come to expect in Bloom's work.

The Ralph Waldo Emerson Award

THE BODY AND SOCIETY: MEN, WOMEN, AND SEXUAL RENUNCIATION IN EARLY CHRISTIANITY. *Peter Brown. Columbia University Press. $45.*

Citation: *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity* is one of those rare books that succeeds in delving deeply into the details of history and putting together a portrait of an ancient age at once rich in learning and scholarship. It provokes insights into the very nature of being "human," and it is shocking and fascinating in its depiction of some extremes of life that most of us dare not even imagine. At first the book seems morbid, and its long history of self-mutilation and bodily denial seems thoroughly depressing. But it is important to face these extremes of human thought, feeling, and behavior; and it is fascinating to notice the ease, frankness and kindness with which Professor Brown describes how some of our distant ancestors rejected what is most basic about us, our physiological bodies, our desires for physical contact, intimacy and children, our sense of ourselves as sexual beings, where this is emphatically not to be understood in any reductive or merely biological sense. Such stories could be horror stories, but his measured prose, his gentle understanding, and his careful scholarship provide us with a context and a spiritual significance that render it all intelligible.

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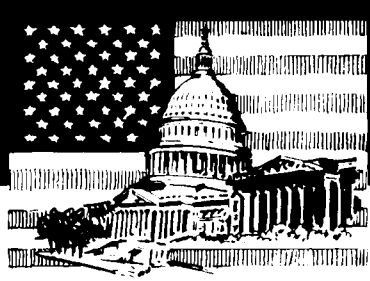

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what they did to win it, varied armaments, a Spitfire; and in the back rooms there are printed and photographic memorabilia. If you are a student of war, the Imperial War Museum is an exciting classroom. I refer to it for this reason: on just about every page of Fussell's book, I want to talk back, to protest, to make convivial or mean comebacks, to correct him. To renounce his beery generalizations, I feel that, after a morning's gambit in the Museum, Fussell and I should repair to the rather vulgar pub on Lambeth Road, across the street from the Museum and just before St. George's Cathedral, for a ploughman's lunch and conversation, reviewing what we've discovered that day. And, as he discourses on his new book, I save my ammunition—he fires first—and then I have my chance. I talk back. Cheers.

Fussell mentions service blunders, events in the war that resulted in unnecessary deaths, tactics that were misconceived from the word *go*. He mentions poison-gas cylinders that were manned "by inept professors of chemistry from the University of London." (For this, Fussell refers to Robert Graves's *Good-bye to All That*, about the First World War.) My response is, "Yes, yes. Like those inept electrical engineers and physicists who developed radar."

Fussell observes: "Ernie Pyle witnessed the Sicilian debacle but either chose not to mention it in his dispatches or, more likely, was forbidden to. It is still insufficiently known." Says who?

Another Fussell anecdote of a blunder: "In October, 1944, the Japanese merchant vessel *Arisan Maru* was neatly torpedoed by the U.S. submarine *Snook*. It sank satisfyingly, together with its cargo, of which its appearance offered no indication. It was carrying thousands of American prisoners being conveyed from the Philippines to safety in Japan. All were drowned." Events such as this happened throughout the war. If it was a blunder, who's to blame? It's always the fashion to apportion blame for mistakes; how was the submarine's commander to know the ship's cargo?

When it's my turn to enter the conversation, I remind Fussell that there are several excellent books that fulsomely and expertly describe some of the major blunders—if that, indeed, is what they were—of the Second World War, and, along the way, seriously question Churchill's prescience and skill in setting strategic directions. In none of these books is Churchill's reputation snagged by shallow barbs from rearguard poets and literary critics.

If a critic of wartime strategies and tactics, and especially of Churchill's leadership, wanted to explore the record with a certain amount of gravity, he would read John Grigg's *Nineteen Forty-Three: The Victory That Never Was*. Grigg, with expert precision and authority, believes that a fundamental error was made in not invading Europe in 1943. The conventional wisdom, which holds that 1944 was the earliest sound invasion date, was "blind as well as bland." Grigg believes, and the record shows, that the United States was suckered by Churchill into fighting, first in North Africa and then in Italy, before invading France. Further, and this is hard to believe, Churchill wanted to land in Norway in 1944, not in France. Churchill and other British leaders felt that Germany could be beaten by a series of attritions in northern Italy, in the eastern Mediterranean, in Greece, in the Balkans, in Romania, and other satellite countries. Following Henry L. Stimson's judgment, Roosevelt redirected American planning. Even after the Allied invasion had been agreed to, Churchill still advocated a 1944 invasion of Norway. This seems incredible; but I do not doubt Grigg's record. As for Sicily, Grigg notes that at the time of the Allied landings, there were about 60,000 German soldiers there, of which nearly 40,000 got away and only 5,500 were captured. Montgomery and Patton's reputations suffered for their actions in Sicily; but many thousands of Allied troops were killed. As for the war in the Pacific, Grigg attributes more blunders to the Japanese than to the United States. The most important American units, the aircraft carriers, escaped destruction at Pearl Harbor, because they were at sea at the time of the attack. And the Japanese failed to blow up our fuel reserves at Pearl Harbor. Grigg uses as his sources the records of many of the war's leaders; he had conversations with some of them. I suspect Liddell Hart and Forrest Pogue are sounder authorities than Evelyn Waugh and Louis Simpson—though not so entertaining. I would advise Fussell that Grigg did a lot of his research at the Imperial War Museum.

Fussell flies to another target—deprivations during the war. He quotes "one woman" who

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remembers, "Rationing was awful, awful. I was always losing the ration books, and you just couldn't get anything good, even if you did have the ration coupons. I can remember thinking a can of corned beef was just marvelous. We ate a lot of Spam." I mention an observation from Grigg's book on Churchill and food, the context of which seems more substantive than one woman's lament. Churchill, Grigg reports, said that the British people would be proud to halve their already short rations for a month if the shipping thus released would contribute to cure the supply difficulty inherent in the conquest of Italy. That round is a draw.

Another day at the pub, Fussell's mood supplements the heavy fall rain beating against the windows. After his third half-bitter, he knocks Roosevelt's public prayer on D-Day—"Help us, Almighty God, to rededicate ourselves in renewed faith in Thee in this hour of great sacrifice." Fussell then implies our ignorance for accepting Eric Sevareid's statement—"If that fight was not holy, if it was not absolutely true that the contest was between good and evil, then no battle ever was such." Then Eisenhower is chopped for calling the invasion "the Great Crusade." Then he lambastes Walter Benton's free-verse, schmaltzy book, a wartime best-seller, *This Is My Beloved*; "O I drew love like honey-steeped wine from every mouth of you—and when we had loved our fill, we laughed, and we were very hungry." Ouch. Blame it on the war. But the quotation alone isn't enough for Fussell's barrage; no, he tells us, horror of horrors, that Benton was "born in Austria of Russian parentage," that he worked as a social worker in New York City, and that after the war, he returned to New York and wrote for magazines; he died in 1976. Fussell notes, too, that Benton was a thirty-three-year-old lieutenant in the Signal Corps. (Such, such were the war's effects on writing and the public taste; and coming from a Russian-born American officer, at that. God help us all.)

Fussell continues: "It does not require great acuteness to perceive what this ethically purified atmosphere will mean for writing. It will mean, among other things, that E. B. White will replace H. L. Mencken as one of America's most attended-to observers and commentators." Fussell runs forward noting that White's wartime essays or editorials were "folksy, coy, over-simplified, self-satisfied." In an intemperate fit, I decide it's my turn to talk back, and I say, "Stop. Enough." Before he lets me have my turn, Fussell smiles at me and says that he attributes Mencken's wartime remission of a wide audience to his pre-war paeans to Germanic culture.

I remind Fussell that I have a number of copies of *The American Mercury*, which Mencken edited. In the December 1933 issue, Mencken, the patriot, compares Hitler as "a fit match for either William Jennings Bryan or David Lloyd George, or for the two of them together." In this review of Hitler's *My Battle*, Mencken wrote that the book "greatly resembles Bryan's *The First Battle*, another effort by a mob orator to make effective rhetoric of the ideas of other men." And Mencken adds, "His anti-Semitism, which has shocked so many Americans, is certainly nothing to marvel over. Anti-Semitism is latent all over Western Europe, as it is in the United States." As a political pundit, Mencken states, "Either he will have to change his programme so that it comes into reasonable accord with German tradition and the hard-won Principia of modern civilization, or they will rise against him and turn him out." Mencken felt that Hitler would disappear, like the Ku Klux Klan and the American Legion. Mencken went to Germany in 1938 and, we learn from Thomas P. Riggio's editorship of the Dreiser-Mencken correspondence, that Mencken "was impressed with its growing economy, saw no possibility of war or violent social upheaval." This sensibility and awareness are not different from Lindbergh's who, after visiting a German concentration camp at the end of the war, says, "This, I realize, is not a thing confined to any nation or people. What the German has done to the Jew in Europe, we are doing to the Jap in the Pacific." Three cheers for E. B. White.

Fussell sighs and goes to another continent. He reports on the "China hoax" and observes how Stilwell and his men "achieved some small revenge by referring to Chiang Kai-Shek as Chancre Jack." He invokes the support of one U.S. marine stationed in Peking after the war. "When I got out of the service, I switched to *Newsweek*. We hated Chiang Kai-Shek," the marine reports. Of course, Fussell blasts Henry Luce, who had a picture of Chiang on the cover of *Time* six times during the war. (Fussell overlooks the fact that, although China was an appendix to the war, it

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was still an area that kept more than one million Japanese troops occupied and out of the Pacific islands, and China served as a base from which American planes bombed the Japanese fortress on Formosa as well as Japanese shipping. And, if by *hoax* Fussell means that we should have supported the Communists, well, that's debatable, and even wrong-headed. I don't need to remind Fussell of this.) And so it goes. Fussell trivializes so many targets that early on you realize his clock has struck thirteen. He satirizes our leaders who urged the troops to kill the enemy. When he isn't using Allied poets as references for his petulant analyses, he makes fun of a lot of bad Allied poets. He might have done better to refer to German wartime poetry, including Hans Jolist, a favorite of the Nazis; he wrote the immortal line, "Man is meat and blood." Our poets were better than their poets.

At the pub, I compliment Fussell on the worthwhile writers about the war whose books he mentions. These include Eugene B. Sledge *(With the Old Breed at Peleliu and Okinawa)*; John Verney *(Going to the Wars)*; Samuel Hynes *(Flights of Passage: Reflections of a World War II Aviator)*; and, one of my favorites, Julian Maclaren-Ross *(Memoirs of the Forties)*. Fussell is by now pleased to know that all is not lost, and asks me to tell him what else is on my mind. I accept his invitation.

Perhaps as many as fifty million people were killed during the Second World War, roughly two-thirds of them civilians. Most of them never had a chance to fight or to fight back. Fewer than 700,000 Americans were in combat; fewer American lives were lost than in the American Civil War: not a bad showing for the victory we helped to achieve. Our victory was owing to a great many factors. The enemy made more mistakes than we did; hindsight informs us of that. I'm old-fashioned enough to believe that heroism and patriotism were not corny things devised by advertising agencies and the Office of War Information—and bad writers and poets. Fussell was wounded in combat, and I'm certain that he knows that there is probably more heroism than cowardice in combat, although almost every man with any sense is scared some of the time. It's probably the norm for the majority of the troops to resent military authority and autocracy and to blame all leaders for their predicament. Fussell records that Norman Mailer in *The Naked and the Dead* "depicts the army as a quasi-fascistic institution." And I don't doubt that it is; otherwise, most men would not be pushed or drawn into combat.

A strange but interesting fact: very likely the best books about the Second World War were produced by the Office of Military History. Written by professional historians, they reveal more of our failures—and successes—than just about anyone would suspect. When they deep-six some of our military and political leaders, they do it with an unrelenting assemblage of firsthand evidence. No need for satire when you read any of these volumes. *Catch 22* is the reality in some instances; it is not fiction. So, as Fussell and I have our last pub lunch, I mention one last statement of his in *Wartime*. "One of the first American novels about the war, Robert Lowry's *Casualty*, published in 1946, is about little but chickenshit, and its appearance the moment the war was over suggests the propellant of deep anger. . . . As his hero Pfc. Joe Hammond observes, 'The army brings out the worst in everybody.' " To that, I talk back: No, not everybody.

I think of a young man from the Midwest named Billie G. Kanell, who remained a private throughout his war in Korea. For some odd, personal reason, I keep in the detritus on my desk a copy of the citation awarding him the Medal of Honor. It was given to him by the direction of Harry S. Truman, president of the United States, and authorized by the March 3, 1863, act of Congress. Private Billie G. Kanell, RA17317531, Company I, 35th Infantry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division, refutes the fiction of Pfc. Joe Hammond. Private Kanell's citation reads:

> [He] distinguished himself by conspicuous gallantry and outstanding courage above and beyond the call of duty, while in action against the enemy, near Pyonggang, Korea, on 7 September 1951. A numerically superior hostile force had launched a fanatical assault against friendly positions, supported by mortar and artillery fire, when Private Kanell stood in his emplacement exposed to enemy observation and action and delivered accurate fire into the ranks of the assailants. An enemy grenade was hurled into his emplacement and Private Kanell threw himself upon the grenade, absorbing the blast with his body to protect two of his com-

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rades from serious injury and possible death. A few seconds later another grenade was thrown into the emplacement and, although seriously wounded by the first missile, he summoned his waning strength to roll toward the second grenade and use his body as a shield to again protect his comrades. He was mortally wounded as a result of his heroic actions. His indomitable courage, sustained fortitude against overwhelming odds, and gallant self-sacrifice reflect the highest credit upon himself, the infantry, and the United States Army.

This is war that doesn't get in the books. Fussell knows this. No corn. No satire. No poetry. No fresh idioms. War.

Dark Equanimity

HONORABLE JUSTICE: THE LIFE OF OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES. *By Sheldon Novick. Little, Brown. $24.95.*

Reviewed by PAUL A. FREUND

A full-scale biography of Justice Holmes has been a project as elusive as it is alluring. During a life of ninety-four years he cut a dashing and paradoxical figure: a Civil War hero, thrice wounded, who resigned his commission at the end of his three-year enlistment while the Union campaign was still under way; a closeted scholar, reading Dante, Mill, and Spengler but shunning the newspapers, who proclaimed that to have truly lived one must partake of the actions and passions of one's time; a jurist loathing, by his admission, most of the welfare and reform measures that he voted to sustain, who was a darling of the Progressives; a patrician viewing "the crowd" at arm's length (in the manner of Irving Babbitt responding to a demonstration in Harvard Yard on a football Saturday: "Let the asses bray"), who became a popular idol; an incorrigible skeptic denying the existence of natural or inherent "rights" anterior to law, who wrote imperishable opinions enshrining the right of free expression.

An authorized biography was entrusted to Professor Mark Howe of the Harvard Law School, a former law clerk of Holmes, who planned a four-volume work but lived to complete just two of the volumes, both superb: *The Shaping Years* and *The Proving Years*, carrying Holmes through the publication of *The Common Law* (1881) in his fortieth year, to his becoming a justice of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court a year later. Holmes kept a list year by year of the books he read, and Howe, by recapturing and reading them, endeavored to recapitulate his subject's intellectual life.

The task of composing the projected third and fourth volumes was undertaken by Professor Grant Gilmore of the Yale Law School, a distinguished common-law scholar, who became disenchanted with his subject and abandoned the project. He felt surfeited by Holmes's continual repetition of his "old chestnuts," and repelled by the Justice's bleak view of man's place in the cosmos. More important, he came to doubt Holmes's scholarship. *The Common Law*, he concluded, was philosophy masquerading as history, and dubious history at that. The book, he confided, had best be regarded as a huge joke. This was a surprisingly harsh judgment. Sir Frederick Pollock, the learned and astringent legal historian, gave the book what the present biographer calls a "cool, intelligent appreciation." Of Pollock it has been said that if he characterized a work as not wholly wrong, that was ultimate praise. Howe had treated the blend of history and philosophical disposition with equanimity, even as a persuasive admixture. Clearly more needs to be said on the issue, which resembles that of the "Whig historians."

The voluminous Holmes papers at the Harvard Law School were then opened to researchers without regard to Howe's pattern, and several have been mining the rich trove. The present biographer has by no means conceived his mission to be the supplementary elaboration of Holmes's judicial career. On the contrary, although he is a practicing lawyer, he disclaims any pretension to a systematic appraisal of the Justice's contribution to American law. As for a comprehensive analysis of Holmes's judicial work in Massachusetts and Washington, "that daunting task remains to be done."

Mr. Novick has chosen to give us less a life of the mind than a full-bodied life in the flesh. There are, to be sure, excursions into the

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sources of Holmes's beliefs (his "can't helps") and the substance of his jurisprudential writings, but these are fragmentary and mainly relegated to talking end notes, where abundant references are made to controversies in the periodical commentaries. What the biographer does provide, with vivid immediacy, is an account, drawing heavily on intimate correspondence, of a supremely gifted man's journey through a New England upbringing, the mud and blood of the battlefield, his driving ambition and scholarly labors, a fifty-seven-year childless marriage to Fanny Dixwell, who was an understanding, reclusive, eccentric, and witty wife, episodic romances, another war (as Mr. Novick puts it) as a judge in a time of an emerging class struggle, and finally elevation to Olympus, where he was not altogether approved by the more entrenched of his colleagues, but was adored by the young. "You are the primal flame," said Tom Corcoran, who had been a law clerk, "to which we come to light our torches." Holmes could absorb a good deal of this, though he despised ignorant praise from a successful litigant.

The book is unsparing in detail. We are not simply told that at Fanny's insistence a telephone was installed at their summer place in Beverly Farms: we are given the phone number. When we learn that Holmes acquired a bicycle and learned to ride it at fifty-four, we also learn that it was an American Humber. Mr. Novick combines a novelist's feeling for the colorful incident, the social and cultural milieu, and inner sensibilities with a lawyer's avid pursuit of facts and healthy concern for the inferences that the record will and will not support.

The Civil War experience as a field officer with the Twentieth Massachusetts Regiment was the most indelible influence in Holmes's life, and perhaps the most significant, and the four chapters devoted to it are among the best in the book. Using Bruce Catton's history of the Army of the Potomac as a framework, the author paints with palpable strokes the life—and ultimate death—of the regiment, the battles fought, the blundering generalship, and the intervals of hunger, filth, sickness, boredom, and horror. The conventional descriptions of Captain Holmes's part—wounded in the neck at Antietam, in the chest at Balls Bluff, in the heel at Fredericksburg—are by comparison absurdly antiseptic.

There is less reflection on the influence of the war upon the psychological and philosophical development of the future judge. Did his incessant references to the honor and courage of the soldier, the glory of sacrifice for a cause one only dimly understands, reveal a dominant sense of pride, or, as has been conjectured, an expunging of guilt for not having done more in the ranks? Did his deeplying skepticism derive from his appreciation of the equal heroism of believers and unbelievers in the abolitionist cause? Or did it originate earlier in the freewheeling talk at the Breakfast Table? Or later, in the meetings of the Metaphysical Club, the small group that included Charles Sanders Peirce, William James, and Nicholas St. John Green, who delighted in "twisting the tail of the cosmos"? How to distinguish influence from affinity?

Was the metaphor of the battlefield, reinforced by the teachings of Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer, a baleful image of law's domain, rather than, say, an image of the community, as has been suggested elsewhere? Before acceding to the critique we must remember that Holmes's image fostered a recognition of the rights of organized labor in conflict with the legal power of organized capital, as well as the widest possible scope for "the thought that we hate" in the conflict of ideas. When in 1920 the redoubtable Dean Wigmore of Northwestern Law School, who served as a colonel in the Judge Advocate General's Department in the First World War, published an article with the title "Freedom of Speech and Freedom of Thuggery in War Time and Peacetime," a slashing attack on Holmes's libertarian dissent in the infamous *Abrams* case, Holmes remarked, "Doubtless Dean Wigmore knows much more about law than I do, but I think I know a little more about war than he does."

Holmes drew refreshment from occasional journeys to Britain, encouraged by his wife to travel alone. During the London season he made the strenuous round of breakfasts, luncheons, teas, and dinners with the social and intellectual "swells"; the ties between Beacon Hill and Mayfair were exceedingly close. Then would follow visits to the country homes in England, Scotland, and Ireland, where he disdained the hunt and heartiness in favor of sessions with the females of the house, for whom presumably the old chestnuts had lost none of their savor. Throughout

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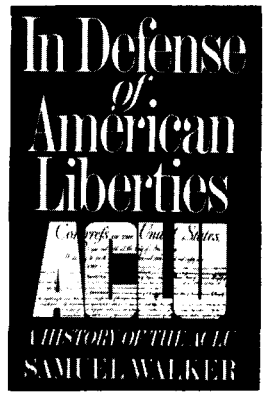

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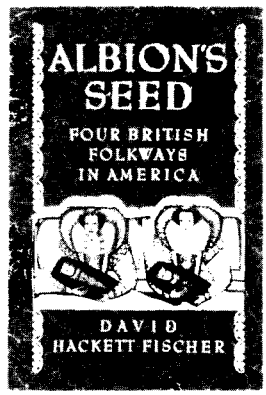

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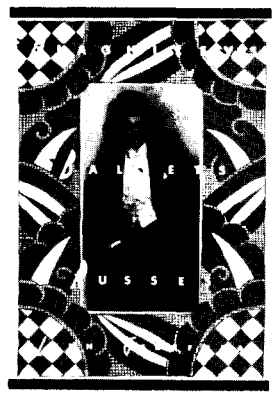

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his life, abroad and at home, he enjoyed the company of the ladies. In truth he lived in a universe different from that of the dull blades of bench and bar, and spoke in a different tongue, effervescent and allusive.

The centerpiece of these expeditions, in the author's design, is presented in a chapter entitled simply "Lady Castletown." In the summer of 1896, when Holmes was fifty-five, he met Lady Clare Castletown, then forty-three, in London and was invited to visit her at her family seat, Doneraile Court, in southern Ireland, where the Castletowns would be staying. The visit was an extended one, and was followed by a correspondence that occupies and ignites the chapter. The letters are all from him; he evidently took care to destroy hers, but despite his warnings, his did survive and surfaced in Ireland after Howe's biography appeared. Copies of 103 letters are deposited with the Holmes papers at Harvard, and Mr. Novick prints excerpts from 37 of them. An even fuller publication is found in John S. Monagan's recent volume, *The Grand Panjandrum*. The letters exhibit none of the judicial restraint that Justice Holmes espoused; neither do they display the crude power of Lord Eldon's love letters, which are said to read like the charging part of a bill in equity. They are full of passionate intensity and pathos too. Mr. Novick presents the excerpts seriatim, without comment or speculation. As in the case of the father-son relationship, he resists any temptation to invoke the name of Sigmund Freud.

In the end, what can be said of Holmes's place in the history of our law? It was his good fortune—and the nation's—that he served as a justice at a time when the dominant judicial vetoes of social and economic legislation cried out for a counterweight, and this he supplied with a voice of tolerance for regulatory experiment and control, a voice born of skepticism. At the same time, such tolerance ended when liberty of thought and expression was at stake. The difference was like that between modifying or abandoning this or that scientific dogma and threatening the scientific method itself.

But Holmes's lasting distinction does not depend on the fortuity of his period of judicial service; after all, issues have changed and so have sentiments about the scope of protected rights and the proper role of the Court in vindicating them. What is most enduring is the elevation of spirit, the capaciousness of mind, that Holmes brought to issues great and small. Mr. Novick has captured this quality in a summary description of Holmes's work on the Massachusetts court: "His opinions were written as if from a pinnacle above time and place, as if by a man whose eye saw every intricacy of the common law spread over a thousand years as a single clear pattern." He is Wallace Stevens's "The pensive man . . . He sees that eagle float / For which the intricate Alps are a single nest." Writing to the young Charles Wyzanski, who had asked for advice on entering law school, he counseled: "For your sake I hope that when your work seems to present only mean details you may realize that every detail has the mystery of the universe behind it and may keep up your heart with an undying faith."

He could transmute the relatively inconsequential case or the minor occasion into a stunning illumination. A majority of the Supreme Court ruled that New York could not regulate commissions of theater ticket brokers because theaters were not a business "affected with a public interest." Holmes's dissent emanated from his different universe: "We have not that respect for art that is one of the glories of France. But for many people the superfluous is the necessary." Presiding at a memorial service in the Massachusetts courtroom for two obscure lawyers, he faced in his own way, with his own metaphor, the ultimate human concern:

> Brethren—we pass from the Abyss *I know not whence* into the Abyss *I know not whither*, and as each of us in his turn leaves the light some one who loved him utters a cry and then the great silence prevails once more. The Churches wisely have prepared for those supreme events which are common to us all liturgies which deal with the universal in universal terms. There is no such service at our command. Neither have we the funeral march and fire of guns with which the army commits its dead soldiers to the grave. We are here—a few men in a room, unhelped, simply stopping for a moment to look the greatest of all facts in the face, to honor the dead, and then like soldiers to go back to the front and fight until we follow our brother.

Although Holmes was far from believing in angels, he spoke and wrote like one. Amid the shifting tides of juristic thought, that is the firmest assurance of his permanence.

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Deeply Affirmative Action

FIVE BLACK SCHOLARS. *By Charles V. Willie. University Press of America. $29. Paper, $9.75.*

Reviewed by ROBERT A. WATSON

In this small, scholarly yet engaging volume the author presents the stages of development in the careers of five black scholars and the factors that led to their achievement. This book should put to rest anyone's propensity to stereotype.

Charles Willie's redoubtable five black scholars are John Hope Franklin, historian; W. Arthur Lewis, economist; Kenneth B. Clark, psychologist; Matthew Holden, Jr., political scientist; and Darwin T. Turner, literary critic. How did the author come up with these selections? First, he asked officers and members of the governing boards of the major professional associations, along with the most prominent black professional organizations, to name the three most outstanding black scholars in their respective fields. Once he had the nominations, Willie then sent the list to members of major professional organizations, members of black associations and the appropriate faculties of 118 black colleges and universities, and asked them to rank the scholars. He also asked respondents to explain the reasons for their selections.

More than five hundred responded and four hundred or more complied with the request to rank the scholars nominated in the five categories. Some of Willie's colleagues objected to the study on the grounds that it was racist. Others simply would not participate because they rejected the whole notion of life history as a method of investigation. At the outset, Willie acknowledges the delicacy in studies of race. Yet he felt that the benefits of his undertaking far outweighed the negative possibilities. And he believes the book can be of practical help to young scholars building their careers, and of "theoretical value to research in sociology, psychology, and anthropology, as well as the broader areas of race relations, human development, and higher education."

✪ ROBERT A. WATSON *is a senior education consultant with Lee Associates, Lexington, Massachusetts.*

Moreover, it is useful to study the lives of "marginal people," those who have achieved and transcended the bonds of race and culture. It was Robert Merton who first reminded us that the minority often represents the interests and values of a society more effectively than the majority.

When the respondents considered the reasons for rating a scholar as outstanding, nine factors emerged. There was overwhelming agreement among those doing the ranking that scholarship (research, writing, and publication) is the chief characteristic for identifying a scholar as outstanding. Not surprising, though it may be dismaying to many, teaching is not considered very important, by both blacks and whites, in evaluating a scholar. While black and white respondents include integrity as one of the nine criteria in judging scholars, it is relegated to the lowest importance of all by both groups. Other criteria, such as professional affiliations and public service, were pretty evenly valued by blacks and whites, although blacks felt that the commitment to the black community was more important than whites did.

This study is very much in the tradition of George Levinson's concept of life structure as reported in *The Seasons of a Man's Life.* Willie delineates four stages in career development of the scholar. The initial phase begins at about age twenty-four, usually two or three years before the acquisition of a doctorate, and lasts about six or seven years. During this time, the scholar engages mostly in teaching, research, and writing. Stage two extends to eight or nine years, and public service is added to the previous activities. In stage three, which lasts for ten or eleven years, the scholar may expand his or her public service and develop some administrative skills—for example, become a dean or department chairman. At around fifty years of age, the scholar enters the fourth and final stage, which lasts fifteen to twenty years. During this time, the scholar may assume further administrative responsibilities, such as leadership in professional organizations or learned societies or a presidency of some institution.

While there is ample data to support the legitimacy of Willie's stages generally, there are always exceptions. And since scholars are people, not all will conform to neat patterns. In fact, it is from life's deviants that we learn about the flexibility of human beings. Will

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those who prematurely enter one stage, or conversely arrive at a stage late, finish early or take longer? Not necessarily so, claims the author. Human experience often entails compensatory action. "In social and psychological systems, nothing is forever fixed and unchangeable," says Willie, who is himself a sociologist at Harvard.

Not surprisingly, scholars publish a great deal. The average number of articles written for scholarly journals by these five scholars during their careers to date is fifty-three; twelve books written or edited is the mean. Each obtained a baccalaureate and master's degree before embarking on a career. Three married before acquiring a Ph.D., and two married after taking their degree. Much is made of family life. Willie identifies a kinship system composed of three phases: the family of orientation, independent householder, and the family of procreation. In stage one, the family of orientation provided the scholar with support, protection, and unconditional love during elementary, secondary, and undergraduate education. Willie is convinced that these elements were extremely important to the development of these scholars. Not having had them, or a premature withdrawal of them, in his view would have had "severe repercussions."

Franklin, Lewis, Clark, Holden, and Turner all benefited from the love and concern they received from their families, and they reflected it. Yet, interestingly, their upbringings were not homogeneous or necessarily of a conventional kind.

John Hope Franklin came from an educated family—his mother was a teacher and his father a lawyer—that had high expectations. Moreover, his parents wanted a racially calm and untroubled upbringing for their children. Consequently, they moved to an all-black town, Rentiesville, Oklahoma, to insure that their children would not suffer indignities from racial insults.

On the other hand, Kenneth Clark was the product of a single-parent household. His mother left her husband and Panama to establish residence in New York with her children. Clark refers to his mother as a "strong" woman. She graduated from high school by attending night school, and she insisted that her son Kenneth go to an academic high school despite efforts of a guidance counselor to enroll him in a vocational institution.

An extended family best describes the early life of Matthew Holden. It included, in addition to his grandparents, numerous aunts, uncles, and cousins. Though his parents did not have much formal education, they valued it greatly. There was never any question about going to college. "It was as preordained as anything could be," said Holden.

W. Arthur Lewis was raised by his mother from the time he was seven years old, when his father died. Both parents attended teacher-training colleges, though not for four years. When Lewis's father died, his mother left teaching and opened a dry goods store. As a youngster on the island of St. Lucia, Arthur attended both French and British schools. As with Clark, Lewis's mother was a major influence on his life and saw to it that he went to England to further his education.

The family of orientation of Darwin T. Turner's life was a powerful one. Both parents were college graduates, his mother being the youngest in the history of the University of Cincinnati. Moreover, his paternal grandfather and maternal grandmother were distinguished educators. St. Louis named a school in honor of his grandfather. Tradition, motivation, and money were all available to Turner. It was, of course, assumed that he would go to college.

Whatever the make-up of the family of orientation, one thing is clear. Each of the scholars had unqualified support during his early years and enjoyed a close, intimate relationship with at least one person. In his extended family, Turner said he was the "chosen one" and expected to take the place of a prematurely deceased uncle who had been heading for medical school. Each of the scholars, in a real sense, was the chosen one in his own family.

Certainly another enormous advantage for these scholars was that the adults who raised them exhibited such positive traits as dignity, purpose, confidence, and determination, and cultivated in the minds of these scholars a clear sense of who they were and what was possible for them. Although the author mentions nothing about the scholars' physical health, save an abundance of energy among the five, one can infer they possessed strong constitutions and a favorable genetic heritage.

One also comes away from *Five Black Scholars* wishing that Willie had said more about the immediate families of these men

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and how, more specifically, they played a key role in their careers. Marriage and career, in Willie's view, tend to stabilize each other. But he leaves us hanging with that observation.

Yet we owe a debt to Charles Willie for this study. His "reputational" approach is the inverse of most research on ethnic and racial groups. Often such work emphasizes social problems and attempts to ascertain why such groups deviate from the norm. Willie turns the custom around by identifying outstanding black scholars and explains how they came by their preeminence.

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GALILEO: HERETIC. *By Pietro Redondi. Translated by Raymond Rosenthal. Princeton University Press. $29.95. Paper, $9.95.*

Reviewed by OWEN GINGERICH

When Pietro Redondi's *Galileo Eretico* reached the best-seller ranks, some of the Italian scholars waggishly compared it with Umberto Eco's *Nome della Rosa.* The implication was, of course, that the young historian of science had created a well-written fantasy, a piece of science fiction about the forces and counterforces that led to Galileo's famous trial before the Inquisition.

The insinuation was unfair to both authors: at least in its English version, Redondi's *Galileo: Heretic* isn't in the same category of readability as Eco's *The Name of the Rose.* To be sure, Eco's fondness for long lists bogged down many would-be readers, but Redondi's extended foray into the philosophy of the Eucharist with its discussion of hylomorphism and transubstantiation, accidents versus substance, kills much of the joy of what otherwise might be a tolerably fine story. Italian-speaking reviewers have contrasted the sparkle of the original with the more somber color of the English, and perhaps the translation has not served Redondi well. I noted several times the word *experience* when *experiment* was surely the correct English idiom, and Italian churchmen were continually being defenestrated—certainly tossing bishops out of windows was more popular in Prague than it ever was in Rome. ("Ousted" is the proper translation of the Italian *defenestrare,* but the cognate word has a narrowly restricted meaning in English.)

Nor did Redondi intend his account to be a mere fantasy, though that has been the reaction of his harsher critics. Galileo-as-martyr has long been a compelling topic, but in Redondi's revisionist view the trial was all a cover-up that has fooled historians (and virtually everyone else) for 350 years. Instead of being tried for his over-enthusiasm for Copernicus's heliocentric astronomy, Redondi argues, Galileo was really under suspicion for a heretical atomism that could have destroyed the Catholic theology of the Eucharist. Pope Urban VIII, instead of being the villain of the piece, actually pulled the strings to get Galileo protected by the lesser charge.

Before considering the merits of Redondi's case, let me first sketch the standard account. In 1609 Galileo Galilei, then a feisty but not yet world-famous professor of mathematics at Padua, learned of an "optic tube" being displayed in nearby Venice, an almost magical device that made faraway objects appear closer. Galileo re-invented the telescope, turned it to the heavens, found the mountains on the moon and the moons of Jupiter, and became an overnight sensation. His discoveries won a coveted court position with Cosimo de' Medici in Florence, where Galileo's title was expanded from Mathematician to Philosopher as well.

"New wine demands new skins"—that may be the only way to explain how the astronomical discoveries turned Galileo into an enthusiast for the Copernican worldview. He had no *proof* of the heliocentric cosmology—as he later wrote, he could not admire enough those who had accepted the sun-centered arrangement *despite* the evidence of the senses. A faithful son of the Church, Galileo tried to persuade the Roman authorities not to give too much sanction to the old geocentric framework that was so much part and parcel of the Christianized-Aristotelian concept of the natural world. But the conservatives reacted strongly against the amateur theologian who claimed that "the Bible teaches how to go to

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heaven, not how the heavens go" and who would have had the Roman professionals reconsider such scriptural verses as "The Lord God laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed forever."

In 1616 Galileo visited Rome to propagandize for his version. His attempts backfired; Copernicus's *De revolutionibus* was placed on the *Index of Prohibited Books* "until corrected"; and Galileo was warned against teaching the Copernican doctrine. He returned to Florence where he remained on good behavior, venting his feistiness on a controversy on the nature of comets (where, in retrospect, Galileo was the wrong-headed party), and eventually, in 1623, writing *The Assayer*, a witty, polemical counterattack on Orazio Grassi's *The Astronomical Balance* and scientific manifesto for the new science. At that very moment a new Pope was being installed: Maffeo Barberini, a fellow Florentine, known as a liberal and as a patron of the arts and sciences. *The Assayer* was hastily dedicated to the new pontiff, who with great delight had the book read to him over breakfast. Shortly thereafter Galileo himself returned to Rome, and obtained permission from Urban VIII, as Barberini was now called, to write an account of the competing geocentric and heliocentric cosmologies. "Very well," said Urban, "but make sure you treat the alternatives hypothetically since you have no proof."

"Ah," Galileo may have replied, "but the flux and reflux of the sea provides the missing proof for a moving earth."

"Be careful! God in his wisdom can make the tides any way he likes, including ways forever beyond human intellect."

In due time, in 1632, Galileo's *Dialogue on the Two Great World Systems* appeared. The conservatives were infuriated, because Galileo's account was by no means neutral, and he spotlighted his proposed proof from the tides. Then, at the end, he placed the Pope's argument in the mouth of one of the three interlocutors, Simplicio, the defender of the Aristotelian philosophy. Though named after a real sixth-century commentator, his Italian readers were astute enough to catch on that "Simplicio" was also a pun on "simpleton." Urban VIII, persuaded that he had been had, responded by unleashing the forces of the Inquisition, who ordered the aging Galileo to

Requiem for Revolution
The United States and Brazil, 1961-1969

Ruth Leacock

The April Fool's Day revolution in Brazil (1964) bore an American and notably anticommunist imprint. President John F. Kennedy's doctrine of counterinsurgency included covert operations to get conservative anticommunists elected to the Brazilian Congress, and to arm and train anticommunist guerrillas. Simultaneously there was overt pressure on the Brazilian government. American support for the new military dictatorship continued, despite the regime's use of torture and terrorist death squads.

The pattern did not have to be reinvented for Central America in the 1980s.

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a trial in Rome. Attempts at compromise failed, Galileo was forced into a humiliating abjuration, and then sentenced to house arrest for the remainder of his days.

So much for the time-honored story of Galileo's rise and fall.

On June 11, 1982, Pietro Redondi was handed a manuscript in the Vatican Archives, a document that turned out to be mislabeled. One of Galileo's young confederates, Mario Guiducci, had mentioned that a complaint had been made about *The Assayer*'s defense of Copernicanism, which naturally puzzled Redondi since that book had nothing to say about the heliocentric cosmology. A Vatican theologian had found nothing condemnable in "that doctrine of motion," which was even more puzzling since the earth's motion had already been proscribed by the Congregation of the Index. So Redondi set out to find the theologian's analysis, and the Archives appeared to have the document. But instead of the expected report, the manuscript brought to him turned out to be an unsigned attack on Galileo's *Assayer*. It accused the Florentine mathematician-philosopher of atomistic views inimical to the Church's understanding of how the bread and wine of the Eucharist could actually become the flesh and blood of Christ while maintaining the "accidents" of the shape and smell of their former substance. Could this previously unanalyzed document hold the key to what had really happened, behind the scenes, in seicento Rome?

A leading candidate for the anonymous accuser was Orazio Grassi, S.J., the very man Galileo had attacked in his *Assayer*. Grassi was a man of many parts—not only a leading Jesuit astronomer, but architect of the mother church of the Jesuits. And, *mirabile dictu*, the anonymous manuscript seemed to be in Grassi's very own hand!

Thus began a thorough investigation into the "theatre of shadows," the subtle world of intrigue where appearances are not all they seem. And here Redondi is a master of the word picture, drawing vivid portraits of princes and popes, cardinals and sinners, and painting memorable images of the trial of the corpse of a heretic, of the carnival of 1626 (including a religious play by Grassi), of the French-Spanish rivalries at the papal court. He also turns out to be a master of rhetorical inuendo, of circumstantial evidence. You would not want Redondi as your opposing lawyer.

Now imagine that the real case against Galileo dated not from the publication of the *Dialogo* or from the 1616 warning not to teach Copernicanism, but from the publication of *The Assayer*. And suppose that the Church's real objection was not to Galileo's defense of heliocentrism, but to the destructive implications of his atomism. Would this not turn the time-honored interpretation of Galileo's trial topsy-turvy? Indeed so!

By 1632, the year of Galileo's *Dialogo*, the international scene was dominated by the Thirty Years' War. The German Jesuits were reeling under the Protestant assault led by Gustavus Adolphus, and they were angered by the papacy's pro-French alignment that tended to favor the Lutheran Swede against the Spanish-Habsburg axis. According to Redondi's revisionist view, when the *Dialogo* appeared, with its fresh atomistic heresies, the Jesuits could no longer sit on the sidelines. Determined to embarrass Urban VIII for being soft on heresy while snubbing the Spanish cardinals, they elected to push the Galileo issue into the forefront. But the Barberini Pope could hardly allow his fellow Florentine to be declared a heretic with respect to the prime theological issue of the day. In a shadowy, behind-the-scenes world, Urban foiled his Jesuit detractors by appointing a special preliminary commission to sort out the alternatives, and to orchestrate a show trial on the lesser charge of teaching the Copernican doctrine. Furthermore, Urban would "defenestrate" or exile the contenders on both sides, including Grassi. Thus Galileo could safely emerge as a suspected disciplinary heretic rather than as a dangerous doctrinal heretic. And the whole Galileo affair could be wrapped in such a ball of secrecy that no one, until Pietro Redondi came along, would stumble onto the truth.

No one, including the French savants, who, full of desire to embarrass the Vatican, specifically asked for the Galileo papers as the first spoils when Napoleon marched into Rome in 1810. Napoleon's troops packed up a large chunk of the Archives for the Bibliothèque Nationale, and to this day not all of the Galileo papers have been recovered. But, in fact, no embarrassing news emerged from that French investigation.

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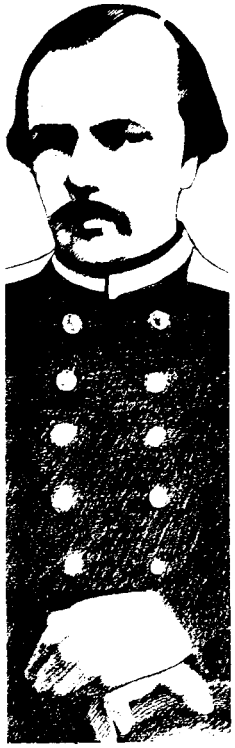
What about the other components of Redondi's dramatic retelling of the Galileo affair? There is now general agreement that the key document in the Vatican Archives is *not* in Grassi's hand; nor in its style can it be an official denunciation. The argument that *The Assayer* is primarily about atomism remains unpersuasive to most Galilean scholars. If it were, why was the book never placed on the *Index*? As the eminent Galileo translator Stillman Drake has pointed out in an unpublished analysis, the *Dialogo* itself has only a single minor and innocuous passage touching on the sensitive issues of atomism and transmutation.

Why the *New York Review of Books* picked Italo Calvino as its reviewer of *Galileo Eretico* is anybody's guess, but perhaps they felt a literary creation demanded a modern man of letters. Calvino waxed enthusiastic, rightly pointing out that the book "gives a rich and detailed picture in which a multitude of elements were intertwined." Calvino's criticism was distinctly muted: "In Redondi's study, which contains so many new and valuable insights enabling us to understand Galileo's story and to place it in its epoch, Galileo himself is what we see least. We are left with a desire to look deeper for some sign of the man." Anthony Pagden, writing in the *TLS*, admitted that "Redondi's vision of seventeenth-century Rome, brilliantly drawn though it is, also makes me uneasy. The colours are all too bright, the lines between friends and enemies all too clear," but essentially he accepted the book's thesis, concluding that "the Church's prime concern was to avoid what it calls 'scandal'. . . . What emerges very clearly from *Galileo: Heretic* is that Galileo fell victim to this, to us seemingly trivial obsession."

The New Republic more appropriately turned to a distinguished historian of the Renaissance, Anthony Grafton, who wrote that "Redondi pulls the reader through the basements and backrooms of a cavernous underworld in the style of Piranesi. . . . Like a historical George Smiley, he wanders down what seem innumerable detours, but always comes back to the single mystery at the heart of the labyrinth: the unknown 'secret of religion and state' that forced . . . the previously sympathetic Barberini Pope Urban VIII to condemn and humiliate the great scientist."



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Noting that "the journey, not the arrival, matters," Grafton nonetheless concluded that "it does seem very hard to believe Redondi's central contention."

More specific in his critique was historian of science Richard S. Westfall, who has been concentrating on Galileo for the past few years. In *Science* he commented that

> behind the book lies the stubborn refusal to believe that serious men could really have been agitated by the Copernican question. However, it remains true that the Church did condemn Copernicanism in 1616 and it did warn Galileo to abandon his campaign in favor of the new astronomy. In 1638 the Papacy would allow Castelli [Galileo's protégé] to visit Galileo only if a third person were present to insure that they would not conspire together about Copernicanism. Avoiding the anachronism and sensitivity to the civilization of the 17th century require one to acknowledge these facts also.

To my mind, the most trenchant and devastating criticism of all came as the final climax of a long and detailed discussion in the *Journal of Modern History* (originally printed in the *Rivista Storica Italiana*) by two scholars from the University of Turin, Vincenzo Ferrone and Massimo Firpo. In checking Redondi's sources, they noticed a letter written to Galileo in 1634, just a year after his condemnation. The correspondent, one Fulgenzio Micanzio, said, "In *The Assayer* I found with great pleasure your discourse about qualities perceived by the senses"—this being, of course, precisely the topic that got Galileo into such trouble, according to Redondi's thesis. Micanzio went on to propose collecting together and reprinting "all of your discourses, including letters, that you have written on such speculations." If Redondi is right, Galileo should have reacted with the utmost alarm, but—big surprise!—Galileo was entirely encouraging and even added in reply, "when you get around to reprinting *The Assayer*, you might consider adding to it the marginal comments that I made to [Grassi's] response; you could pretend that someone had given to the printer a copy of his book bearing marginal comments that responded to his objections." A strong reaction indeed: Galileo's annotated copy of Grassi's book survives, including such marginalia as "ass," "buffalo," and "most elephantine."

To this day the Galileo affair maintains its power to evoke strong passions. If Redondi's thesis ultimately fails, his book has at least brought the biggest controversy the history of science has seen in a quarter century. It has surely made historians more sensitive to the complex nuances that entangled the birth of modern science. Perhaps it has also made scholars generally more sensitive to the "story" in h*istory*, to the role of selecting and assembling materials in the historian's craft, and to the fact that the writing of history is a continuing and never final activity of creative minds.

Just Plain Bill

WILLIAM WORDSWORTH: A LIFE. *By Stephen Gill. Oxford University Press. $29.95.*

Reviewed by EVELYN TOYNTON

It has been twenty-five years, Stephen Gill tells us in his preface, since the last major biography of Wordsworth was published (Mary Moorman's two-volume study), and since that time much new material has been uncovered about "his school-days and early adult years," "the day-to-day chronology of Wordsworth's life," and his "manuscripts and working methods," all of which information calls for a new look at the poet's life.

Mr. Gill might also have mentioned that there has been a general revival of interest in the Romantics lately. Even such comparatively minor members of Wordsworth's circle as Dorothy Wordsworth and Sara Coleridge have found their biographers and champions. (Molly Lefebure's *Bondage of Love* convincingly defended Sara Coleridge against the general view of her—fostered by her husband's endless complaints—as a mindless shrew who virtually drove Coleridge to opium addiction.) And Grevel Lindop's *The Opium-Eater: A Life of Thomas De Quincey* succeeded beautifully at restoring both De Quincey and his writings to us, in all their quirkiness, erudition, and pathos. If Mr. Gill

✪ EVELYN TOYNTON's essay on George Gissing appeared in the Winter 1990 issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR.

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could do the same for Wordsworth—bring him vividly before us, enable us in some sense to relive his experience, as we do with characters in good fiction—he would be performing an admirable service, the more so since Wordsworth is an infinitely greater writer than De Quincey, and therefore one in whom greater interest can be expected to exist.

Admittedly, it is not an easy task. De Quincey's manifold sufferings and passionate allegiances immediately arouse the reader's sympathy. No one, I think, could call Wordsworth a sympathetic character. His solemn and dogged egotism, his emotional woodenness, his cowardice about ever expressing his supposedly reformist convictions in circles where they might get him into trouble, his often callous behavior toward his supporters and admirers may have something to do with the fact that no really great biography of him has ever been written. Even those not predisposed to feminist ire are likely to feel indignant when reading of the reverential treatment accorded him by the women of his circle: "I saw him living wholly among *Devotees,*" wrote Coleridge, "having every the minutest Thing, almost his very Eating and Drinking, done for him by Sister, or Wife—and I trembled lest a Film should rise, and thicken on his moral Eye."

But nobody ever said that geniuses had to be nice people, nor could anyone without a fairly large ego have undertaken to write the *Prelude.* It might be expected that the new information on the poet's childhood and early adult years that Mr. Gill mentions would at least afford us new insight into the sorrows of the young Wordsworth, who was not only orphaned at an early age but was deprived of his patrimony and of the company of his beloved sister and brothers. And even if it is beyond the power of any biographer to make us *like* Wordsworth, we might be left with a strong sense of that loftiness of presence, so much of another age from our own, that inspired such devotion and so impressed an ailing young friend of the family that even before Wordsworth had in any way demonstrated his powers as a poet, the dying man left him an annuity so that he could devote himself to his writing.

Unfortunately, Mr. Gill has not been able to do this. He seems to have a singular lack of both descriptive and narrative powers, and if Wordsworth fails ever to take on a coherent

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presence in these pages, so, alas, does everyone else. One gets the feeling that anything remotely approaching "human interest" has been stringently excluded. The visit of Wordsworth's future wife to his and Dorothy's rented house at Racedown, significant because it marked the beginning of their acquaintance as adults, is referred to only in passing, in a single phrase, and no description of Mary Wordsworth is offered until the final paragraph of the book, when she is suddenly called "strong, wise and steadfast, a heroine if ever there was one." When the Wordsworths, on a visit to France, visit his first love and the illegitimate daughter she bore him twenty-seven years before, we are told nothing about what sort of life the mother of his child has managed to make for herself, nor about her attitude toward the man who promised to marry her and then betrayed that promise.

In talking of the joyful beginnings of Wordsworth's friendship with Coleridge—surely the high point of Wordsworth's poetic life, perhaps the catalyst without which his greatest poems would never have been written—Mr. Gill laboriously describes Coleridge's political writings and his "power in service of ideas, unfamiliar ideas that offered fascinating possibilities of explanation." Coleridge's metaphysical brilliance, his political radicalism, his devotion to poetry were undoubtedly what attracted Wordsworth to him, but citing these things so abstractly gives us no sense at all of Coleridge, that most foolishly human of geniuses—the only person, as one writer put it, who could have made Wordsworth jump over a fence. By devoting just a single paragraph to Coleridge's earlier life—his childhood glee in riding trains and luring clergymen into metaphysical argument, his desperate enlistment in the army under the name of Silas Tomkyn Comberbacke and subsequent adventures as the most inept soldier ever to wear His Majesty's colors, his plans to establish a Utopian community on the banks of the Susquehannah—Mr. Gill might have awakened in us that affection for Coleridge that even the flinty Wordsworth felt. As it is, it comes as almost a shock to go from the cautious analyses of the biographer to the vivid immediacy of Coleridge's own words. Only when he quotes Coleridge's criticisms of Wordsworth's poetry, or his outpourings of grief and shame after the later rift between them, does Mr. Gill manage to convey any sense of either Coleridge's brilliance or his suffering.

At other times, Gill seems not to grasp the implications of what he is telling us. When Wordsworth ruthlessly eliminates all of Coleridge's poems from the second edition of the *Lyrical Ballads,* when he leaves his wife alone with a newborn baby and a dangerously ill child to go off on a pleasure jaunt, no comment is made on the monumental selfishness of such acts. Perhaps it is unrealistic to expect an academic—Mr. Gill is a Fellow and Tutor of Lincoln College, Oxford—to exercise simple common sense in his judgments, or to have a lively gift for description. Since he says in his preface that, although "what follows *is* a biography, not an 'intellectual history' exegesis of specific works and phases of thought," his "subject is Wordsworth the writer," and he has "not hesitated to sacrifice domestic detail when other material about Wordsworth's writings and publication competed for space," it may be unfair to ask him to squander space on such domestic details as Mary Wordsworth's personality.

But Mr. Gill also seems maddeningly blind to what he ought to care about most: the aesthetic merits of Wordsworth's poetry. He quotes endlessly from inferior poems because of the insight they supposedly afford into the development of Wordsworth's philosophy, or he claims distinction for such trivial efforts as "An Evening Walk," or he blithely ignores, in countless passages like the following, that the lines he is so ponderously analyzing are appalling poetry:

> At the opening of Book VII [of the *Prelude*] Wordsworth admits that
>
> slowly doth this work advance
> Through the whole summer have I been at rest,
> Partly through voluntary holiday
> And part through outward hindrance.
>
> This is clearly a poetic device—a particularly significant one in the history of Romantic poetry. In a daring contrast to those moments where Milton invokes Divine aid for his lofty song, Wordsworth invites the reader to meet the poet in his own poem.

Even when, as occasionally happens, Gill acknowledges that the poems under discussion have little literary merit, he then goes on to say that "their composition, however,

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marked a very important moment in Wordsworth's intellectual life," as though that were the really important thing. It never seems to occur to him that the chief interest of Wordsworth's poetry does *not* lie in the clues it provides to his state of mind when he was writing it—that, in fact, his states of mind are of interest only because this was the mind that produced "Tintern Abbey" and the great passages of the *Prelude* and the "Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood" (which receives less attention in this book than such ghastly productions as "The Warning," a work Mr. Gill calls, typically, "an interesting document, if not an interesting poem").

Returning to the preface once more, we find Gill stating

> [his] conviction . . . that Wordsworth's later years cannot be dismissed as of "merely biographical interest." The modern critical consensus is that Wordsworth's best poetry was written before he was 40 and that it would have been better for his critical reputation had he joined Keats, Shelley, and Byron in an early death. It is not likely that this literary-critical evaluation will be reversed. What needs to be recognized, however, is that as Wordsworth grew older he became a stronger, not a weaker, power in national culture.

I find this passage truly puzzling. Does Mr. Gill mean to imply that Wordsworth's best poetry *wasn't* written before he was forty? That this is merely a critical prejudice? Surely no other great poet ever wrote as much boring, flat-footed verse as Wordsworth, and most of this he churned out after he was forty. Mr. Gill makes a few feeble attempts to claim greatness for such later works as "Yarrow Revisited," but the lines he quotes only refute his argument:

> What were mighty Nature's self?
> Her features, could they win us,
> Unhelped by the poetic voice
> That hourly speaks within us?

If, on the other hand, his point is that Wordsworth's later years are of more than biographical interest because of his literary influence, then surely to demonstrate that influence he ought to discuss its specific fruits in the poetry of the day. (Interestingly, Gill nowhere mentions Matthew Arnold's conten-

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tion that once the rage for Tennyson started, in 1842, Wordsworth's influence ceased to be as strong.) Instead we get a catalogue of the visitors to Rydal Mount and bland descriptions of the poet's favor-currying with wealthy aristocrats. The "paradox" of which Mr. Gill makes much in his preface—that is, the fact that Wordsworth's fame among his contemporaries came "just as, in the judgement of most critics, he stopped being an important poet"—seems no more remarkable than that someone should become famous only after he is dead. (Gill fails to come up with a convincing explanation of why exactly the visionary gleam departed Wordsworth when it did, but then no one ever has.)

Probably the most interesting new material in the book is the description of Wordsworth's obsessive revisions, which continued up to his death, and the mental and physical anguish they caused him. There is also some fairly convincing, if repetitive, speculation about how Wordsworth's feeling that he must complete a long, comprehensive philosophical poem (the poem Coleridge always wanted him to write) hampered his poetic production. By and large, though, this is a disappointing book, satisfying to neither the scholar nor the general reader. If the latter hopes to get a vivid sense of Wordsworth, he would do much better to read Hazlitt.

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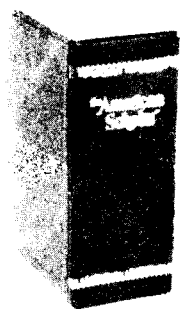

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The Reader Replies . . . . . .

The Japanese-American Internment

Eric Sundquist's letter, which appeared in the Autumn 1989 SCHOLAR to amplify his paper ("The Japanese-American Internment," Autumn 1988) on the incarceration of Japanese Americans with a comment on the role of the American Civil Liberties Union was informative and, so far as I know, completely accurate. I would like only to add a few points that your readers may find interesting.

When I was doing research for my book *Japanese Americans*, I interviewed Wayne Collins several times. He enjoyed playing the role of the flamboyant Irishman even to an audience of one, especially since it was an appreciative audience. He was willing to let me wander through the organization's files, but that generous gesture was canceled by Ernest Besig. Perhaps the choicest item he gave me was already published in the *ACLU News*: the results of a survey of the Northern California membership on the responses of these civil libertarians to the incarceration. For example, 144 favored the President's order, 84 opposed it, and 47 had no comment. One member upbraided the ACLU for even posing the questions, which pertained to "military strategy" and was "definitely none of your business as an organization."

Like every other liberal organization of the period, the ACLU had been infiltrated by Communists. Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, an avowed leader of the Communist Party and also a member of the ACLU board of directors, combined devout support of Soviet totalitarianism with a provisional demand that civil rights be granted to Americans. Just before the war a fight over her ousting from the board (not from the ACLU itself) had split the Union, and the branch in Northern California was by that criterion among the farthest left in the whole country. In my opinion, it is impossible to understand the contradictions in such individuals as Carey McWilliams or such organizations as the ACLU without taking into account the totalitarian tinge to their civil libertarian beliefs. During the life of the Stalin-Hitler pact, Communists described the war between Nazi Germany and European democracies as a conflict between equally culpable imperialist powers. From June 21, 1941, when Germany attacked the Soviet Union, every iota of American power had to be mustered to guarantee victory. Communists opposed strikes, which would disrupt the production of arms; they were against the abolition of segregation in the armed forces, which would then fight less efficiently. And they supported the outrage of Japanese-American incarceration, accepting the patently false excuse that these vegetable growers, these grandmothers and babes in arms, represented a threat to national security.

WILLIAM PETERSEN
Carmel, California

Oh God, Poor God

William J. Abraham (Autumn 1989 SCHOLAR) has diagnosed the lamentable state of modern theology with admirable clarity and restraint. Simultaneously pursuing and fleeing the will-o'-the-wisp of modernity, many theologians have indeed abandoned both intellectual rigor and the spiritual moorings of the Christian faith. But it is important to emphasize, as Mr. Abraham does not, that heterodoxy and philosophical flabbiness are not the inevitable companions of the contemporary quest for liberation. The British theologians A. M. Allchin, Kenneth Leech, and Rowan Williams, for example, ably represent a tradition which has long joined together radical politics, sound scholarship, creedal orthodoxy, and mystical spirituality which Mr. Abraham rightly admires.

JOHN RICHARD ORENS
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Primo Levi

Gabriel Motola's appreciative review of Primo Levi's *Other People's Trades* (THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, Winter 1990) takes for granted what I find impossible to accept: namely, that Levi committed suicide. Was there incontrovertible evidence that Levi threw himself down a flight of stairs? That he had not tripped and fallen? Or that he, who had recently undergone "debilitating surgery" (as I read somewhere) had not fallen after a

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sudden dizzy spell? Did Levi leave a suicide note? What justifies the "suicide" conclusion?

Is it likely that a man who was a yea-sayer to life in his art would, like some quasi-Dostoyevskian character, hurl himself down a flight of stairs to his death? Is it likely that a writer with a profound sense of humor, curiosity, and a hunger for clarity and lucidity would quit life, especially when that writer called the obscure writing of Paul Celan a "pre-suicide" (as Mr. Motola informs us), connected with Celan's suicide?

Would a sensitive, devoted son "desert" the ailing aged mother he was taking care of (as I have read somewhere)?

Would a chemist kill himself by leaping down a flight of stairs?

Would a sixty-nine-year-old man, forty-plus years out of Auschwitz, say "I've had enough of life"?

BERNARD ADELMAN
Winthrop, Massachusetts

GABRIEL MOTOLA replies: Having visited Primo Levi in the summer of 1985 at his home in Turin, having walked up the circular marble staircase to his fourth floor apartment, I know that the balustrade of the staircase was some four feet high. Levi, not taller than five feet five or six inches, would have had to hoist himself onto it in order to have "fallen" over the balustrade; the inescapable likelihood is that he leapt over it—not one flight to another landing as some newspaper reports may have led readers to believe but to the ground floor four flights below.

Despite his being a conscientious son and loving husband, despite his being engaged in a couple of writing projects about which he was enthusiastic, despite, in a word, his living what seemed to be a full and rich life, he had been depressed in recent months before his death. According to his biographer, Ian Thomson, writing in the *London Sunday Times* on 30 April 1989, Primo Levi hadn't gone out of his house for weeks preceding his death. His depression was attributed to a physical ailment, to what he perceived was a growing acceptance of the theories of young revisionist German historians who maintain that the Nazi atrocities were not peculiar to Germany, to his mother's debilitated condition which required constant attention by Primo Levi and his wife.

But even before Thomson's article had appeared, I published an essay in *European Judaism* (1988 [Holocaust] Conference Issue) in which, among other things, I tried to explain what I then believed and still believe to be his suicide. What seemed to me to be among the most persuasive elements of a mental state that would permit an understanding hence an acceptance of suicide as a means to alleviate the pain that all survivors endure was Levi's discussion of Jean Améry, with whom Levi shared many characteristics. Levi's explanation of Améry's suicide applies equally to Levi himself.

Erratum

In my review of John Paul Russo's biography of I. A. Richards in the Winter 1990 SCHOLAR ("Impractical Criticism"), I referred to Richards's wife as Dorothy Richards. Her correct first name is Dorothea.

WILLIAM H. PRITCHARD

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